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FARTHER APPEAL

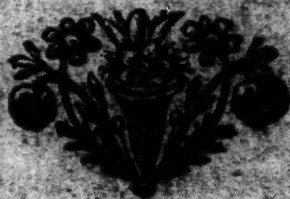
To MEN of

REASON and RELIGION.

By JOHN WESLEY, M. A.
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Let the Righteous smite me friendly and reprove me.
PSAL. CXXI. 5.



L O N D O N:

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A

FARTHER APPEAL

To MEN of

REASON and RELIGION.

PART II.

I. 1. **I**T is not my Present Design to touch on any Particular *Opinions*, whether they are Right or Wrong; nor on any of those smaller Points of Practice, which are variously held by Men of different Persuasions: But first, to point out some Things which on *Common* Principles are condemned by Men of every Denomination, and yet found in all; and Secondly, Some wherein those of each Denomination, are more particularly inconsistent with *their own* Principles.

And, First, it is my Design, abstracting from *Opinions* of every kind, as well as from disputable Points of Practice, to mention such of those Things as occur to my Mind, which are on *Common* Principles condemned, and notwithstanding found, more or less, among Men of every Denomination.

2. But before I enter on this unpleasing Task, I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of GOD, by whatever Love you bear to GOD, to your Country, to your own Souls; do not consider who speaks, but what is spoken. If it be possible, for one Hour lay Prejudice aside; Give what is advanced a fair Hearing. Consider simply on each Head, Is this True, or is it false? Is it Reasonable, or is it not? If

you ask, " But in whose Judgment ? " I answer, In your own ; I appeal to the Light of your own Mind. Is there not a Faithful Witness in your own Breast ? By this you must stand or fall. You cannot be judged by another Man's Conscience. Judge for yourself by the best Light you have. And the merciful GOD teach me and thee, whatsoever we know not !

Now, as I speak chiefly to those who believe the Scriptures, the Method I propose is this, First, To observe what Account is given therein of the *Jews*, the antient Church of GOD, inasmuch as *all these Things were written for our Instruction*, who say, we are now the Visible Church of the GOD of *Israel*. Secondly, To appeal to All who profess to be Members thereof, to every one who is called a Christian, How far, in each Instance, the Parallel holds ? And how much *we* are better than *they* ?

3. First, I am to observe what Account the Scriptures give of the *Jews*, the antient Church of GOD. I mean, with Regard to their Moral Character ; Their Tempers and Outward Behaviour.

No sooner were they brought out of *Egypt*, than we find them *murmuring against GOD*. (*Exod. xiv. 12.*) Again, when he had just brought them thro' the *Red Sea with a mighty Hand and a stretch'd out Arm*. (*c. xv. 24.*) And yet again, quickly after, in the Wilderness of *Zin*, your *Murmurings* (saith *Moses*) *are not against us, but against the Lord*, (*c. xvi. 8.*) Nay, even while he was giving them *Bread from Heaven*, they were still *murmuring and tempting GOD*, (*c. xvii. 2, 3.*) and their amazing Language at that very Season was, *Is the Lord among us or not ?* (*c. xvii. 4.*)

The same Spirit they shew'd, during the whole forty Years, that he bore their *Manners in the Wilderness*: A solemn Testimony whereof, *Moses spake in the Ear of all the Congregation of Israel*, when GOD was about to take him away from their Head ; *They have corrupted themselves*, (saith he) *their Spot is not of his Children ; they are a perverse and crooked Generation. The Lord led Jacob about ; he instructed him ; he kept him as the Apple of his Eye*. (*Deut. xxxii. 5, 10.*) He made him ride on the high Places of the Earth, that he might

eat the Increase of the Fields: Then he forsook GOD which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his Salvation, (v. 11, 13, 15.)

In like Manner GOD complains long after this, Hear, O Heavens, and give Ear, O Earth! I have nourish'd and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me. The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib: But Israel doth not know, my People doth not consider. Ah sinful Nation, a People laden with Iniquity, a Seed of evil Doers, Children that are Corrupters, they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel, (Isa. i. 2, 3, 4.) Can a Maid forget her Ornaments, and a Bride her Attire? Yet my People have forgotten me, Days without Number, (Jer. ii, 32.)

4. And as they did not like to retain GOD in their Knowledge, so they had small Regard to the Ordinances of GOD. Even from the Days of your Fathers, (saith GOD by his Prophets) ye are gone away from mine Ordinances, and have not kept them, (Mat. iii. 7.) Ye have said, It is vain to serve GOD: and, what Profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances? (v. 13.) Thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob, but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel: Thou hast not brought me my Burnt-Offerings, neither hast thou honour'd me with thy Sacrifices, (Isa. xlv. 22, 23.) And so the Prophet himself confesses, Thou meetest those that remember thee in thy Ways—But there is none that calleth upon thy Name. that stirreth up himself to take Hold of thee, (Isaiah lxiv. 5, 7.)

5. But they call'd upon his Name by vain Oaths, by Perjury and Blasphemy. So Jeremiab, Because of Swearing the Land mourneth (c. xxiii. 10.) And tho' they say, the Lord liveth, surely they swear falsely, (c. v. ii.) So Hosea, They have spoken Words, swearing falsely in making a Covenant: So Ezekiel, They say the Lord seeth us not, the Lord hath forsaken the Earth. So Isaiab, Their Tongue and their Doings are against the Lord, to provoke the Eyes of his Glory, (c. iii. 8.) They say, Let him make speed and hasten his Work that we may see it, and let the Counsel of the Holy One draw nigh and come that we may know it, (c. v. 19.) And so Malacki, Ye have wearied the Lord with your Words;

ye say, every one that doeth Evil, is good in the Sight of the Lord, and he delighteth in them; And, Where is the GOD of Judgment? (c. ii. 17.)

6. And as they despised his Holy Things, so they profaned his Sabbaths, (Ezek. 22. 8.) Yea, when GOD sent unto them, saying, Take Heed unto yourselves, and bear no Burden on the Sabbath Day, neither do ye any Work, but hallow ye the Sabbath Day, as I commanded your Fathers;—Yet they obeyed not, neither inclined their Ear, but made their Neck stiff, that they might not bear nor receive Instruction, (Jer. xvii. 21, 22, 23.)

Neither did they honour their Parents, or those whom GOD from Time to Time appointed to be Rulers over them. In thee (in Jerusalem, saith the Prophet) they have set light by Father and Mother, Ezek. xxii. 7.) And from the very Day when GOD brought them up out of the Land of Egypt, their Murmurings, Chiding, Rebellion and Disobedience, against those whom he had chosen to go before them, make the most considerable Part of their History, So that had not Moses stood in the Gap, he had even then destroy'd them from the Face of the Earth.

7. How much more did they afterwards provoke GOD, by Drunkenness, Sloth and Luxury? They have erred thro' Wine, (saith the Prophet, Isaiah) and thro' strong Drink they are out of the Way; (c. xxviii. 7.) which occasioned those vehement and repeated Warnings, against that reigning Sin; Woe to the Drunkards of Ephraim, them that are overcome with Wine, (v. 1.) the Drunkards of Ephraim shall be trodden under Foot; (v. 3.) Woe unto them that rise up early that they may follow strong Drink; that continue until Night till Wine inflame them.—But they regard not the Work of the Lord, neither consider the Operation of his Hands, (c. v. 11, 12.) Woe unto them that are mighty to drink Wine, and Men of Strength to mingle strong Drink; (v. 22.) Woe to them that are at ease in Zion,—that lie upon Beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the Flock, and the Calves out of the Midst of the Stall; that chant to the Sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves Instruments of Musick,—that drink Wine in Bowls, and anoint themselves with

the chief Ointments ; but they are not grieved for the Affliction of Joseph, (Amos vi. ver. 1, 4, 5, 6.) Behold this (saith Ezekiel to Jerusalem) was the Iniquity of thy Sister Sodom ; Fulness of Bread and Abundance of Idleness was in her and in her Daughters, (c. xvii. 49.)

8. From Sloth and Fulness of Bread, Lewdness naturally follow'd. It was even while Moses was with them, that the People began to commit Whoredom with the Daughters of Moab : Yea, of the Daughters of Zion Isaiah complains, They walk with stretched forth Necks and wanton Eyes, (c. iii. 16.) And of his People in general GOD complains by Jeremiah, When I had fed them to the full, they assembled themselves by Troops in the Harlot's Houses. They were as fed Horses in the Morning, every one neighed after his Neighbour's Wife, (c. v. 7, 8.) They be all Adulterers, an Assembly of treacherous Men, (c. ix. 2.) The Land is full of Adulterers, (c. xxiii. 10.)

Yea, and some of them were given up to unnatural Lusts. Thus we read, Judges xix. 22. The Men of Gibeab beset the House wherein the Stranger was, and beat at the Door, and spake to the Master of the House, saying, Bring forth the Man that came into thine House, that we may know him. And there were also long after Sodomites in the Land, in the Days of Rehoboam and of the following Kings : The very Shew of whose Countenance witnessed against them, and they declared their Sin as Sodom, they bid it not, (Isa. iii. 9.)

9. This was accompanied with Injustice in all its Forms. Thus all the Prophets testify against them, The Lord looked for Judgment, but behold Oppression ; for Righteousness, but behold a Cry, (Isa. v. 7.) Thou hast taken Usury and Increase ; thou hast greedily gained of thy Neighbour by Extortion—Behold, I have smitten my Hand, at thy dishonest Gain which thou hast made, (Ezek. xxii. 12, 13.) The Balances of Deceit are in Jacob's Hand ; he loveth to oppress (Hos. xii. 7.) Are there not yet the scant Measure that is abominable ; the wicked Balances, and the Bag of deceitful Weights ? (Mic. vi. 10, 11.) He that departeth from Evil, maketh himself a Prey, (Isa. lix. 15.) And the Lord saw it, and it displeased him, that there was no Judgment. The Wicked

Wicked devoureth the Man, that is more righteous than he. They take up all of them with the Angle, they catch them in their Net, and gather them in their Drag, (Hab. i. 13, 14, 15.) They covet Fields and take them by Violence, and Houses, and take them away, (Mic. ii. 2.) They pull off the Robe with the Garment, from them that pass by securely, (v. 8.) They have dealt by Oppression with the Stranger; they have vexed the Fatherless and the Widow: (Ezek. xxii. 7.) The People of the Land have used Oppression and exercised Robbery; and have vexed the Poor and Needy, yea, they have oppressed the Stranger wrongfully, (v. 29.) Their Works are Works of Iniquity, and the Act of Violence is in their Hands, (Isa. lix. 6.) Judgment is turned away backward, and Justice standeth afar off; for Truth is fallen in the Street, and Equity cannot enter, (v. 14.)

10. Truth indeed was fallen, as well as Justice. Every Mouth, saith *Isaiab*, speaketh Folly, (c. ix. 17.) This is a rebellious People, lying Children, (c. xxx. 9.) their Lips have spoken Lies and muttered Perverseness. None calleth for Justice, nor any pleadeth for Truth; they trust in Vanity and speak Lies, (c. lix. 3, 4.) This occasioned that Caution of *Jeremiah*, Take ye heed every one of his Neighbour, and trust ye not in any Brother; for every Brother will utterly supplant, and every Neighbour will walk with Slanders. And they will deceive every one his Neighbour, and will not speak the Truth; they have taught their Tongue to speak Lies, and weary themselves to commit Iniquity, (c. ix. 4, 5.)

11. And even those who abstained from these gross outward Sins, were still inwardly corrupt and abominable. The whole Head was sick, and the whole Heart was faint; yea, from the Sole of the Foot even unto the Head there was no Soundness, but Wounds and Bruises, and putrifying Sores, (Isa. i. 5, 6.) All these Nations (saith God) are uncircumcised; and all the House of Israel are uncircumcised in Heart, (Jer. ix. 26.) Their Heart is divided, (Hos. x. 2.) They have set up their Idols in their Heart; they are all estranged from me through their Idols, (Ezek. xiv. 3, 4.)

Their Soul still cleave unto the Dust. They laid up Treasures upon Earth. From the least of them, saith *Jere-*

Jeremiah; even unto the greatest, every one is given to Covetousness., (c. vi. 13.) They panted after the Dust of the Earth, (Amos ii. 7.) They laded themselves with thick Clay, (Hab. ii. 6.) They joined House to House, and laid Field to Field; until there was no Place, (Isa. v. 8.) Yea, they enlarged their Desires as Hell: They were as Death, and could not be satisfied, (Hab. ii. 5.)

12. And not only for their Covetousness, but for their Pride of Heart were they an Abomination to the Lord. *The Pride of Israel, saith Hosea, doth testify to his Face, (c. vii. 10) Hear ye, give ear, saith Jeremiah, be not proud—Give Glory to the Lord your God, (c. 13. 15.) But they would not be reprov'd; they were still wise in their own Eyes, and prudent in their own Sight, (Isa. v. 21.) and continually saying to their Neighbour, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou! (Isai. lxxv. 5.)*

They added Hypocrisy to their Pride. *This People, saith God himself, draw near me with their Mouth, and with their Lips do honour me, but have removed their Hearts far from me, (Isa. xxix. 13.) They have not cried unto me with their Heart, when they howled upon their Beds, (Hos. vii. 14.) They return, but not to the Most High; they are like a deceitful Bow, (v. 16.) They did but flatter him with their Mouth, and dissemble with him in their Tongue, (Psal. lxxviii. 36.) so that herein they only profaned the Holiness of the Lord. And this have ye done again, saith Malachi, covering the Altar of the Lord with Tears, with weeping and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the Offering any more, (c. ii. 11. 13.)*

13. This God continually declared to those formal Worshippers, That their Outside Religion was but vain. *To what Purpose is the Multitude of your Sacrifices, saith the Lord? I am full of the Burnt-Offerings of Rams, and I delight not in the Blood of Bullocks, or of Lambs, or of He Goats. Bring no more vain Oblations: Incense is an Abomination unto me; the New Moons and Sabbaths, the calling of Assemblies, I cannot away with; it is Iniquity, even the solemn Meeting.—When you spread forth your Hands, I will*
hide

hide mine Eyes from you; yez, when ye make many Prayers, I will not hear, (Isa. i. 11. 13. 15.) He that killeth an Ox is as if he slew a Man; he that sacrificeth a Lamb, as if he cut off a Dog's Neck, (c. lxvi. 3.) When they fast, I will not hear their Cry; and when they offer an Oblation, I will not accept it, (Jer. xiv. 12.) Go ye, serve your Idols, if ye will not hearken unto me; but pollute ye my holy Name no more with your Gifts, (Ezek. xx. 39.)

14. Yet all this Time were they utterly careless and secure; nay, confident of being in the Favour of God. They were at Ease; they put far away the evil Day, (Amos vi. 1. 3.) Even when GOD had poured his Anger upon Israel, it set him on fire round about, yet he knew it not: It burned him, yet he laid it not to Heart, (Isa. xlii. 25.) A deceived Heart had turned him aside, that he could not say, Is there not a Lie in my Right-hand? (c. xliv. 20.) So far from it, that at this very Time they said, *We are innocent, we have not sinned*, (Jer. ii. 35, 37.) *We are wise, and the Law of the Lord is with us*, (c. viii. 8.) *The Temple of the Lord! the Temple of the Lord are we*. (c. vii. 4.)

15. Thus it was that they harden'd themselves in their Wickedness. *They are impudent Children, saith God, and stiff-hearted*, (Ezek. ii. 4.) *Were they ashamed when they had committed Abomination? Nay they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush*, (Jer. vi. 15.) *I have spread out my Hand all the Day to a rebellious People, that provoketh me to Anger continually to my Face*, (Isa. lxv. 2, 3.) *They will not hearken unto me, saith the Lord, for all the House of Israel are impudent and hard-hearted*, (Ezek. iii. 7.) *Since the Day that their Fathers came forth out of the Land of Egypt unto this Day, I have sent unto them all my Servants the Prophets, rising up early and sending them; yet they hearken'd not unto me, nor inclin'd their Ear, but harden'd their Neck; they did worse than their Fathers*, (Jer. vi. 25, 26.)

They were equally harden'd against Mercies and Judgments. When he gave them Rain, both the former and the latter in his Season; when he reserved unto them the appointed Weeks of the Harvest, filling their Hearts with Food and Gladness, still none of this re-

volting

volting and rebellious People said, Let us now fear the Lord our GOD, (Jer. v. 23, 24.) Nor yet did they turn unto him when he smote them, (c. ix. 9. 13.) In that Day did the Lord call to weeping and to mourning: and behold Joy and Gladness, eating Flesh and drinking Wine; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die, (c. xxii. 11, 12.) Altho' he consumed them, yet they refused to receive Instruction; they made their Faces harder than a Rock.—None repented him, but every one turned to his Course, as a Horse rusheth into the Battle, (Jer. v. 3. c. viii. 6.) I have given you Want of Bread in all your Places, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have also with-holden the Rain from you when there were yet three Months unto the Harvest. — I have smitten you with Blasting and Mildew; your Gardens and your Vineyards the Palmer-Worm devoured.—I have sent among you the Pestilence after the Manner of Egypt; your young Men have I slain with the Sword—I have overthrown some of you, as GOD overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a Firebrand pluck'd out of the Burning; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord, (Amos iv. 6.—11.)

16. In consequence of their Resolution not to return, they would not endure sound Doctrine, or those that spake it. They said to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, prophesy not unto us right things—Speak unto us smooth things—Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us, (Isa. xix. 10, 11.) But they hated him that rebuked in the Gate, and they abhorred him that spake uprightly, (Amos v. 10.) Accordingly, thy People (saith GOD to Ezekiel) still are talking against thee, by the Walls, and in the Doors of the Houses, (c. xxxiii. 30.) And Amaziah the Priest sent to Jeroboam, King of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the Midst of the House of Israel; the Land is not able to bear all his Words. Also Amaziah said unto Amos, Go flee thee away into the Land of Judah, and prophesy there. But prophesy not again any more at Bethel, for it is the King's Chapel, and it is the King's Court, (c. vii. 10. 12. 13.) From the same Spirit it was that they said of Jeremiab, Come and let us devise Devices

Devices against him—Come and let us smite him with the Tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his Words, (c. xviii. 18.) Hence it was that he was constrained to cry out, *O Lord, I am in Derision daily; every one mocketh me. Since I spake, the Word of the Lord was made a Reproach unto me, and a Derision daily: For I heard the defaming of many, Fear on every Side: Report, say they, and we will report it: All my Familiars watched for my halting; saying, Peradventure he will be imiced, and we shall prevail against him, and we shall take our Revenge on him, (c. xx. 7, 8, 10.)* And elsewhere, *Woe is me, my Mother, that thou hast born me a Man of Strife, and a Man of Contention to the whole Earth. I have neither lent on Usury, nor Men have lent to me on Usury: yet every one of them doth curse me, (c. xv. 10.)*

17. But if a Man walking in the Spirit of Falshood, do lie (saith the Prophet Micah) saying, I will prophesy unto thee of Wine and strong Drink, he shall even be the Prophet of this People, (c. ii. 11.) And God gave them Pastors after their own Heart; such were those Sons of Eli, Sons of Belial, who knew not the Lord, (1 Sam. ii. 12.) rapacious, covetous, violent Men, (v. 14, 15, 16,) by reason of whom Man abhorred the Offering of the Lord, (v. 17.) who not only made themselves vile, (c. iii. 13.) but also made the Lord's People to transgress, (c. ii. 24.) while they made themselves fat with the chiefest of all the Offerings of Israel, (v. 29.) Such were those of whom Isaiah says, *The Priest and the Prophet have erred thro' strong Drink; they are swallowed up of Wine, (c. xxviii. 7.)* Come ye, say they, *I will fetch Wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong Drink; and To-morrow shall be as this Day, and much more abundant, (c. lvi. 12.)* Therefore (saith he) *the Lord hath poured out upon you the Spirit of deep Sleep, and hath closed your Eyes: The Prophets and the Seers hath he covered; and the Vision of all is become unto you as the Words of a Book that is sealed, (c. xxix. 10, 11.)* Such also were those of whom he saith, *His Watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant; they are all dumb Dogs; they cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.*

ber. Yea, they are greedy Dogs, which can never have enough, and they are Shepherds that cannot understand. They all look to their own Way, every one for his Gain, from his Quarter. (c. lvi. 10, 11.)

Little better were those of whom the Prophets that followed have left us so dreadful an Account; Both Prophet and Priest are profane; yea, in my House have I found their Wickedness, saith the Lord. And from the Prophets of Jerusalem, is Profaneness gone forth into all the Land, (Jer. xxiii. 11. 15.) Her Priests have violated my Law, and have profaned my holy things: they have put no Difference between the Holy and the Profane, and I am profaned among them, (Ezek. xxii. 26.) If I be a Father, where is mine Honour; and if I be a Master, where is my Fear? saith the Lord of Hosts unto you, O Priests, that despise my Name, (Mal. i. 6.)

Yea, some of them were fallen into the grossest Sins. The Company of Priests, saith Hosea, commit Lewdness: There is Whoredom of Ephraim, Israel is despised, (c. vi. 9, 10.) I have seen also in the Prophets of Jerusalem (saith God by Jeremiah) an horrible thing; they commit Adultery and walk in Lies, (c. xxiii. 14.)

18. And those who were clear of this, were deeply covetous. Who is there among you, that would shut the Doors for nought? Neither do ye kindle Fire on my Altar for nought. I have no Pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, (Mal. vi. 10.) The Priests of Zion preach for Hire, and the Prophets thereof divine for Money. Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? (Mic. iii. 11.) Thus, saith the Lord, the Prophets bite with their Teeth, and cry, Peace: And he that putteth not into their Mouths, they even prepare War against him, (c. iii. 5.) Therefore the Word of the Lord came unto Ezekiel, saying, Prophecy against the Shepherds of Israel, and say, Woe be to the Shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves: Should not the Shepherds feed the Flocks? Ye eat the Fat, and ye cloath you with the Wool; but ye feed not the Flock. The Diseas'd have ye not strengthen'd, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye

bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost, but with Force and with Cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered because there is no Shepherd, and they became Meat to all the Beasts of the Field. Yea, my Flock was scattered upon all the Face of the Earth, and none did search or seek after them, (c. xxxiv. 1.—6.)

19. To the same Effect do the other Prophets declare, Ye are departed out of the Way, ye have caused many to stumble.—Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the People, (Mal. ii. 8, 9.) From the Prophet even unto the Priest, every one deal-eth falsely. They have healed also the Hurt of the Daughter of my People slightly, saying Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace, (Jer. vi. 13, 14.) * They prophesy Lies in my Name, (c. xiv. 14.) They say still unto them that despise me, the Lord hath said, ye shall have Peace; and they say unto every Man that walketh after the Imagination of his own Heart, no Evil shall come upon you, (c. xxiii. 17.) The Prophets of Jerusalem strengthen the Hands of the Evil-doers, that none doth return from his Wickedness, (v. 14.) They have seduced my People, and one built up a Wall, and lo others daubed it with untemper'd Mortar, (Ezek. xiii. 10) With Lies they have made the Hearts of the Righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the Hands of the Wicked, that he should not return from his wicked Way, by promising him Life, (v. 22) Many Pastors have destroyed my Vineyard, they have trodden my Portion under Foot; they have made my pleasant Portion a desolate Wilderness, (Jer. xii 10) There is a Conspiracy of her Prophets in the Midst of her, like a roaring Lion, ravening the Prey. They have devoured Souls, (Ezek. xxii. 25.) Thus saith the Lord, Feed the Flock of the Slaughter; whose Possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty, and they that sell them say, Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich; and their own Shepherds pity them not, (Zach. xi. 4, 5.)

II. 1.—Such is the general Account which the Scriptures give of the Jews, the antient Church of God.
And

And since all these things were written for our Instruction, who are now the visible Church of the God of Israel, I shall in the next Place appeal to all who profess this, to every one who calls himself a Christian, How far in each Instance the Parallel holds? and how much we are better than they?

And first, were they *discontented*? Did they *repine* at the Providence of God? Did they say, *Is the Lord among us or not?* When they were in imminent Danger, or pressing Want, and saw no Way to escape? And which of us can say, *I am clear from this Sin*: I have washed my Hands and my Heart in Innocency? Have not we who judge others, done the same things? murmured and repined times without Number? yea, and that when we were not in pressing Want, nor distressed with imminent Danger. Are we not in general, (our own Writers being the Judges) have we not ever been from the earliest Ages, a *repining, murmuring, discontented* People, never long satisfied either with God or Man? Surely in this we have great need to humble ourselves before God; for we are in no wise better than they.

But *Jeshurun* forsook GOD which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his Salvation. And did not England too? Ask ye of the Generations of old, enquire from the Rising of the Sun to the going down thereof, whether there was ever a People called by his Name, which had less of GOD in all their Thoughts? Who in the whole Tenor of their Behaviour shew'd so light an Esteem for the Rock of their Salvation?

Could there ever be stronger Cause for God to cry out, *Hear, O Heavens, and give Ear, O Earth!* For hath he not nourished and brought us up as his Children? And yet, how have we rebelled against him! If Israel of old did not know God; if his antient People did not consider; was this peculiar to Them? Are not we also under the very same Condemnation? Do we, as a People, know GOD? Do we consider him as God? Do we tremble at the Presence of his Power? Do we revere his excellent Majesty? Do we remember at

all Times, God is here ! He is now reading my Heart : He spieth out all my Ways : There is not a Word in my Tongue but he knoweth it altogether : Is this the Character of us *English Christians* ? The Mark wherehy we are known from the *Heathen* ? Do we thus *know* God ? Thus *consider* his Power, his Love, his all-seeing Eye ? Rather, are we not likewise a *sinful Nation*, who *have forgotten him Days without number* ! A People *laden with Iniquity*, continually *forsaking the Lord, and provoking the Holy One of Israel*.

2. There is indeed a wide Difference, in this Respect, between the *Jews* and us ; they *happen'd* (if I may so speak) to forget God, because other things came in their Way : But we *design* to forget him ; we do it of set Purpose, because we do not like to remember him. From the Accounts given by *Jeremiah*, we have Reason to believe, that when that People was most deeply corrupted, yet the greatest Men in the Nation, the Ministers of State, the Nobles and Princes of *Judah*, talk'd of God sometimes, perhaps as frequently as upon any other Subject. But is it so among us ? Rather, is it not a Point of Good-breeding to put God far away, out of our Sight ? Is he talk'd of at all among the Great ? The Nobles, or Ministers of State in *England* ? Among any Persons of Rank or Figure in the World ? Do they allow God any Place in their Conversation ? From Day to Day, from Year to Year, do you discourse one Hour of the Wonders he doth for the Children of Men ? If one at a Gentleman or Nobleman's Table was to begin a Discourse, of the Wisdom, Greatness or Power of God, would it not occasion (at least) as much Astonishment, as if he had begun to talk Blasphemy ? And if the *unbred* Man persisted therein, would it not put all the Company into Confusion ? And what do you sincerely believe the more favourable Part would say of him when he was gone ? But that " He is a little touch'd in his Head ; " or " Poor Man ! he has not seen the World."

You know, this is the naked Truth. But how terrible is the Thought to every serious Mind ! Into what a State is this *Christian* Nation fallen ! Nay, the Men of Eminence, of Fortune, of Education ! Would not a thinking Foreigner who should be present at such an Interview, be apt to conclude, That the Men of Quality in *England* were Atheists ? That they did not believe there was any God at all ; or, at best, but an *Epicurean* God, who sat at Ease upon the Circle of the Heavens, and did not concern himself about us Worms of the Earth ? Nay, but he understands every Thought now rising in your Heart. And how long can you put him out of your Sight ? Only till this Veil of Flesh is rent in sunder. For your *Pomp* will not then follow you. Will not your Body be mingled with common Dust ? And your Soul stand naked before God ? O that you would now acquaint yourself with God, that you may then be clothed with Glory and Immortality !

3. Did God complain of the *Jews*, *Even from the Days of your Fathers ye are gone away from mine Ordinances, and have not kept them* ? And how justly may he make the same Complaint of us ? For how exceeding small a Proportion do we find of those in any Place who call themselves Christians, that make a Conscience of attending them ? Does one Third of the Inhabitants in any one Parish throughout this great City, constantly attend *Publick Prayer* and the *Ministry of his Word*, as of Conscience towards God ? Does one Tenth of those who acknowledge it as an Institution of Christ, duly attend *the Lord's Supper* ? Does a fiftieth Part of the nominal Members of the Church of *England* observe *the Fasts* of the Church, or so much as the forty Days of *Lent*, and all *Fridays* in the Year ? Who of these then can cast the first Stone at the *Jews*, for neglecting the Ordinances of God ?

Nay, how many Thousands are found among us, who have never partook of the Supper of the Lord ? How many Thousands are there, that live and die in this unrepented Disobedience ? What Multitudes,

even in this *Christian City*, do not attend any *Publick* Worship at all? No, nor spend a single Hour from one Year to another in *privately* pouring out their Hearts before God? Whether God *meeteth him that remembreth him in his Ways* or not, is no Concern of theirs: So the Man eats and drinks, and *dies as a Beast dieth*,

“ Drops into the Dark and disappears.”

It was not therefore of the Children of *Israel* alone, that the Messenger of God might say, *There is none (comparatively) that calleth upon thy Name, that stirreth himself up to take hold of thee.*

4. Ye have heard, that it was said to them of old Time, *Because of Swearing the Land mourneth.* But if this might be said of the Land of *Canaan*, how much more of *this Land*? In what City or Town, in what Market or Exchange, in what Street or Place of Public Resort, is not the Holy Name *whereby we are called* taken in vain, Day by Day? From the Noble to the Peasant, who fails to call upon GOD, in this, if in no other Way? Whither can you turn, where can you go, without hearing some praying to GOD, for Damnation either on his Neighbour or himself? Cursing those, without either Fear or Remorse, whom Christ hath brought to inherit a Blessing!

Are you one of these Stupid, Senseless, Shameless Wretches, that call so earnestly for Damnation on your own Soul? What if GOD shou'd take you at your Word? Are you able to dwell with everlasting Burnings? If you are, yet why shou'd you be in haste, to be in the *Lake of Fire burning with Brimstone*? GOD help you, or you will be there, soon enough, and long enough; for that *Fire is not quenched. But the Smoke thereof ascendeth up, Day and Night, for ever and ever.*

And what is that important Affair, concerning which you was but now appealing to GOD? Was you calling GOD to record upon your Soul, touching your

Ever-

Everlasting Salvation? No; but touching the Beauty of your Horse, the Swiftneſs of your Dog, or the Goodneſs of your Drink! How is this? What Notion have you of GOD? What do you take Him to be?

Idcirco ſtolidam præbet tibi vellere barbam Jupiter?

What Stupidity, what Infatuation is this! Thus without either Pleaſure or Profit or Praise, to ſet at naught him that hath *all Power both in Heaven and Earth!* Wantonly to *provoke the Eyes of his Glory!*

Are you a Man of Letters, who are ſunk ſo low? I will not then ſend you to the Inſpired Writers (ſo called: Perhaps you may diſdain to receive Inſtruction by them,) but to the Old, blind Heathen. Cou'd you only fix in your Mind the Idea he had of GOD, (tho' it is not ſtrictly juſt, unleſs we refer it to GOD made Man) you wou'd never thus affront him more,

Ἦ, καὶ κενώμενοι ἐπ' ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ Κροῖαν
Ἀμβρόσια δ' ἄρα χάριται ἐπεργάσαντο Ἀνακτός
Κροῖτος ἀπ' ἀθανάτοιο μέγαν δ' ἐδέξατο Ὀλυμπος.

Shall not the very Heathen then, *riſe up in Judgment againſt this Generation, and condemn it?* Yea, and not only the Learned Heathens of Greece and Rome, but the Savages of America. For I never remember to have heard a Wild Indian name the Name of *Soota-lei-cātee*, (Him that ſitteth in Heaven) without either laying his Hand upon his Breaſt, or caſting his Eyes down to the Ground. And you are a *Chriſtian!* O how do you cauſe the very Name of *Chriſtianity*, to be blaſphemed among the Heathen!

5. But is it *Light Swearing* only, (inexcusable as that is) becauſe of which our Land *mourneth?* May it not alſo be ſaid of us, *Tho' they ſay the Lord liveth, ſurely they ſwear falſely?* Yea, to ſuch a Degree, that there is hardly the like, in any Nation under Heaven; that almoſt every Corner of the Land is filled with wilful, deliberate *Perjury*.

I ſpeak

I speak not now of the Perjuries which every Common Swearer cannot but run into Day by Day. (And indeed Common "Swearing notoriously contributes to the Growth of Perjury. For Oaths are little minded when Common Use has sullied them, and every Minute's Repetition has made them cheap and vulgar.") Nor of those which are continually committed and often detected in our open Courts of Justice. Only with Regard to the latter I must remark, That they are a Natural Consequence, of that monstrous, shocking Manner, wherein Oaths are usually administer'd therein: Without any Decency or Seriousness at all; much less with that awful Solemnity, which a Rational Heathen wou'd expect, in an Immediate Appeal to the Great GOD of Heaven.

I had once designed to consider all the Oaths which are customarily taken by any Set of Men among us. But I soon found this was a Work too weighty for me: So almost in *infinitum* are Oaths multiplied in *England*: I suppose to a Degree which is not known in any other Nation in *Europe*.

What I now propose is, To instance only in a few, (but those not of small Importance) and to shew, how amazingly little Regard is had, to what is solemnly promised or affirmed before GOD.

6. This is done, in part, to my Hands by a late Author. So far as he goes, I shall little more than transcribe his Words. (Mr. Disney's First Essay, p. 30.)

"When a Justice of Peace is sworn into the Commission, he makes Oath—" That he shall do equal Right to the Poor and to the Rich, after his Cunning, Wit and Power, and after the Laws and Customs of the Realm and Statutes thereof made, in all Articles in the King's Commission to him directed.—What those Articles are, you will find in the first Assignavimus of the Commission: "We have assigned you and every one of you, jointly and severally—to keep and cause to be kept, all Ordinances and Statutes, made for—the Quiet, Rule and Government of our People in all and every the Articles thereof, according to the Force, Form and Effect of the same, and to chastise and pu-
nish

nish all Persons, offending against any of them, according to the Form of those Statutes and Ordinances." So that he is solemnly sworn to the Execution of all such Statutes, as the Legislative Power of the Nation has thought fit to throw upon his Care. Such are all those, (among others) made against *Drunkenness, Tipling, Profane Swearing, Blasphemy; lewd and disorderly Practices, and Profanation of the Lord's Day.* And 'tis hard to imagine how a Justice of Peace can think himself more concerned, to suppress Riots, or Private Quarrels, than he is to levy Twelve-pence on a Profane Swearer, Five Shillings on a Drunkard, Ten Shillings on the Publick House that suffers Tipling, or any other Penalty which the Law exacts of Vice and Immorality. The same Oath binds him both to one and the other, laying an equal Obligation upon his Conscience. How a Magistrate, who neglects to punish Excess, Profaneness and Impiety, can excuse himself from the Guilt of *Perjury*, I don't pretend to know. If he reasons fairly, he will find himself as much *forsworn*, as an Evidence who being upon his Oath, to declare *the whole Truth*, nevertheless conceals *the most considerable Part* of it. And his Perjury is so much the more infamous, as the ill Example and Effects of it will be mischievous."

7. The same Author (in the Preface to his Second Essay) goes on :

" You, Gentlemen of the *Grand Juries*, take a solemn Oath, That you will *diligently enquire*, and true *Presentment* make, of *all* such Articles, Matters and Things as *shall be given you in Charge*: As also, that you will (not only present no Person for Envy, Hatred or Malice, but) not leave any *unpresented*, for Fear, Favour or Affection." Now are not the Laws against Immorality and Profaneness *given you in Charge*, as well as those against Riots, Felony and Treason? Are not Presentment and Indictment One Method expressly appointed by the Statutes, for the Punishment of *Drunkenness and Tipling*? Are not Houses of *Bawdry and Gaming*, punishable in the same Courts, and consequently *presentable* by you? Is not the Proclamation for the punishing

punishing of Vice, Profaneness and Immorality, always read before you as soon as you are sworn? And does not] the Judge of Assize, or Chairman of the Bench, in the Charge given immediately after the reading it, either recite to you the particular Laws against such Offences, or refer you for them to that Proclamation? 'Tis plain from all this, that you are bound upon your *Oaths*, to *present All Vice and Immorality*, as well as other Crimes, that fall within your Knowledge, because they are expressly given you in Charge. And this you are to do, not only when *Evidence* is offer'd before you by the *Information of others*, but with Regard to all such Offences as you or any of you are able of *your own Personal Knowledge* to present: All which you have sworn to do impartially, without *Fear, Favour or Affection*."

I leave it now with all reasonable Men to consider, How few *Grand Jurors* perform this? And consequently, What Multitudes of them, throughout the Nation, fall under the Guilt of *Wilful Perjury*!

8. The Author proceeds (p. 8.) " I shall next address myself to you that are *Constables*. And to you I must needs say, That if you know your Duty, 'tis no Thanks to us that are *Justices*. For the Oath we usually give you is so *short*, and in such *general Terms*, that it leaves with you no Manner of Instruction in the Particulars of the Office to which you are sworn: But that which ought to be given you, recites Part of your Duty, in the following Words:

" You shall do your best Endeavour, that Rogues, Vagabonds and Night-walkers be apprehended; and that the Statutes made for their Punishment, be duly put in execution: You shall have a *watchful Eye* to such as shall keep any House or Place where any *unlawful Game* is used: As also to such as shall *frequent* such Places, or shall *use* any *unlawful Games*, there or elsewhere. You shall *present all* and *every* the Offences contrary to the Statutes made to restrain the *tippling in Inns, Ale-houses, and other Victualling Houses*, and for repressing of *Drunkenness*. You shall once in the Year, during your Office, present all Popish Recusants. You shall

shall well and duly execute all Precepts and Warrants to you directed. And you shall well and duly, according to your Knowledge, Power and Ability, do and execute *all other Things* belonging to the Office of a *Constable*, so long as you shall continue therein."

Upon this "I would observe first, That *Actors of Plays* are express by Name within the Statute, to be taken up for Vagabonds, and punish'd accordingly: And that tho' a Statute of Queen *Elizabeth's* excepts such Companies as have a Licence under the Hand and Seal of a Nobleman, yet a later Statute in the Reign of King *James I.* has taken away that Protection from them; by declaring that *from thenceforth no Authority to be given by any Peer of the Realm, shall be available to free or discharge them from the Pains and Punishments of that former Statute.* Every *Constable* therefore in those Parishes, where any of these *strolling Players* come, is bound by his *Oath* to seize upon, correct, and send them packing without Delay."

"The next Part of your Oath obliges you to keep a watchful Eye, on such Houses as keep and such Persons as use *unlawful Gaming.* The Statute directs you *weekly, or at least monthly,* to search within your Liberties, all Houses or Places suspected of this Offence, and upon discovering, to bring them to Punishment. Upon this Article I would observe, 1. That the Law makes some Allowance, for Artificers, Husbandmen, Apprentices, Labourers and Servants, to *play in Christmas,* but at no other time of the Year; and 2. That *all Sports and Pastimes* whatsoever are made *Unlawful* upon the Lord's Day, by a Statute of King *Charles II.* You are therefore bound upon *Oath,* to bring to Punishment such as are guilty of *profaning* that Day by any Sports or Pastimes whatsoever."

The following Parts of your Oath are, 1. That you shall *present all and every* the Offences of *Tippeling* and *Drunkenness* that come to your Knowledge; 2. That you shall once in the Year *present* all Popish Recusants. Nay, and by the Statute on which your Oath is grounded, you are obliged once a Year to *present in Session,* all those within your Parishes, who (not being Dissenters)

Dissenters) come not once in a Month, at least, to Church." And 3. That you shall *well and duly* execute all *Precepts and Warrants* to you directed. I believe no *Constable* will pretend to be ignorant of this. How is it then, that when we send out Warrants, to *levy* on Offenders for *Swearing, Drunkenness* and the like, those *Warrants* are so ill obey'd? Are you not sworn to execute *these* as well as any other, and that *duly* too, according to the Tenor of your *Precept*? Your *Precept* tells you, you shall *demand* such a Sum; and if the Offender will not pay, you shall *levy* it by *Distress of his Goods*: And if *no Distress can be taken*, you are *then* only to set him *in the Stocks*; otherwise you have no Authority so to do: Nor is the setting him in the Stocks, when you might have distrain'd, any Execution of your *Precept*."

"The last Part of your Oath is in *general Terms*, That you shall *well and duly*, according to your Knowledge, Power and Ability, do and execute *all other Things* belonging to the Office of a *Constable*. I shall instance in some Things which certainly *belong to your Office*, because you, and none else, can do them. 1. A *Constable* may, *without a Warrant*, apprehend any Persons, and carry them before a Justice, who are driving Carts, Horses or Cattle on the Lord's Day: 2. He may do the same, *without a Warrant*, to such as he shall find at *any Sports or Pastimes* on that Day: 3. To such as he shall find *tippling* in Publick-Houses: 4. To Shopkeepers *selling or exposing Goods to sale* on the Lord's Day; and lastly, to such as he shall find *drunk or blaspheming, or profanely swearing or cursing*."

"Thus I have shewn you, in part, *what belongs to your Office*: It is well, if according to the Tenor of your Oath, you *duly, to the best of your Knowledge and Ability, do and execute all these Things*. But remember, that, if you do not, if you neglect any of them, you are *forsworn*."

Now let all Men judge, How many *Constables* in England are clear of Wilful Perjury!

9. "I will now (he goes on) address myself to *Churchwardens*. Your Oath is, "That you shall well and

and truly execute the Office of a *Church-warden*, for the ensuing Year; and to the best of your Skill and Knowledge, *present* such Persons and Things, as are *presentable*, by the Ecclesiastical Laws of the Realm." I shall set down only a few of these.

"The Statute of King James I. obliges you to *present* once a Year, all monthly *Absenters* from Church."

"The 90th Canon enjoins you, first to *admonish*, and then, if they reform not, to *present*, all your Parishioners who do not *duly* resort to Church on Sundays, and there continue the *whole Time of Divine Service*. On this Article observe, 1. That a Person's being absent from Church, is Ground sufficient for you to proceed. 2. That you are not only to *present*, those who *do not come* to Church, but also those that behave *irreverently* or *indecently* there, either walking about, or talking; all who do not *abide there orderly and soberly*, the whole Time of Service and Sermon, and all that *loiter away any Part* of that Time, in the Church-yard or in the Fields."

"The 112th Canon enjoins you, within 40 Days after Easter, to *exhibit* to the Bishop or his Chaancellor, the Names of all above the Age of sixteen, within your Parish, that did not receive the Communion."

"Other Statutes oblige you to *present Drunkenness, Tippling, and Publick Houses suffering Persons to tipple* in them."

"And the 109th Canon binds you to *present all manner of Vice, Profaneness and Debauchery*, requiring you faithfully to *present all and every* the Offenders in *Adultery, Whoredom, Drunkenness, Profane Swearing, or any other Uncleaness and Wickedness of Life*." It is therefore a Part of that Office to which you are solemnly sworn, to *present not only all Drunkenness and Tippling, but Profane Swearing, Lewdness, and whatsoever else is contrary to Christian Piety*. So that if you know any of your Parishioners, be his Quality or Circumstances what they will, that is guilty of any of these, you are obliged to *present him at the next Visitation*, or you are yourselves guilty of *Perjury*. And the 26th Canon expresses such an Abhorrence of a

Church-warden's Neglect in this Matter, that it, forbids the Minister, in any wise, to admit you to the Holy Communion, who (as the Words of the Canon are) having taken your Oaths to present all such Offences in your several Parishes, shall notwithstanding your said Oaths, either in neglecting or refusing to present, wittingly and willingly, desperately and irreligiously incur, the Horrid Guilt of Perjury."

And who is clear? I appeal to every Minister of a Parish, from one End of England to the other, How many Church-wardens have you known, in twenty, thirty, forty Years, who did not thus desperately and irreligiously incur, the horrid Guilt of Perjury?

10. I proceed to Perjuries of another Kind. The Oath taken by all Captains of Ships, every Time they return from a Trading Voyage, runs in these Terms:

"I do swear, That the Entry above written, now tender'd and subscribed by me, is a just Report of the Name of my Ship, its Burthen, Built, Property, Number and Country of Mariners, the present Master and Voyage: And that it doth further contain a true Account of my Lading, with the particular Marks, Numbers, Quantity, Quality and Consignment, of all the Goods and Merchandizes in my said Ship, to the best of my Knowledge; and that I have not broke Bulk, or delivered any Goods out of my said Ship, since her loading in."

So help me God.

These Words are so clear, express and unambiguous, that they require no Explanation. But who takes this plain Oath, without being knowingly and deliberately forsworn? Does one Captain in fifty? Does one in five Hundred? May we not go farther yet? Are there five Captains of Vessels now in London, who have not at one Time or another, by this very Oath, which they knew to be false when they took it, incurred the Guilt of Wilful Perjury?

11. The Oath which all Officers of his Majesty's Customs, take at their Admission into their Office, runs thus:

"I do swear to be true and faithful in the Execution, to the best of my Knowledge and Power, of the Trust com-

committed to my Charge and Inspection, in the Service of his Majesty's Customs: And that I will not take or receive, any Reward or Gratuity, directly or indirectly, other than my Salary, or what is or shall be allowed me from the Crown, or the regular Fees establish'd by Law, for any Service done or to be done in the Execution of my Employment in the Customs, on any account whatsoever. So help me God."

On this it may be observed, 1. That there are Regular Fees, *establish'd by Law*, for some of these Officers; 2. That the rest, do hereby engage, not to take or receive any Reward or Gratuity, *directly or indirectly*, other than their Salary or Allowance from the Crown, on any account whatsoever.

How do the Former keep this solemn Engagement? They whose Fees are *establish'd by Law*? Do they take those *establish'd Fees*, and no more? Do they not receive any farther Gratuity? Not, on any Account whatsoever? If they do, they are undeniably guilty of *Wilful Perjury*.

And do the latter take no Fees at all? Do they receive no Reward or Gratuity, for any Service done, or to be done, in the Execution of their Employment? Do they not take any Money, *directly or indirectly*, on any Account whatsoever? Every time they do receive either more or less, they also are flatly *forsworn*.

Yet, who scruples either the one or the other? Either the taking a larger Fee than the Law appoints? Or the taking any Fee, large or small, which is offer'd, even where the Law appoints none at all?

What innumerable *Perjuries* then are here committed, over and over, day by day! And without any Remorse; without any Shame! Without any Fear either of God or Man!

12. I will produce but one Instance more. The Oath of one who votes for a Member of Parliament is this:

"I do swear, I have not received or had, by myself, or of any Person whatsoever in trust for me, or for my Use and Benefit, directly or indirectly, any Sum or Sums of Money, Office, Place or Employment,

Gift or Reward, or any Promise or Security for any Money, Office, Employment or Gift, in order to give my Vote at this Election, and that I have not before been polled at this Election. So help me God."

We may observe here, 1. That this Oath is taken, once in seven Years (if not oftner) by all the Freeholders, in every County throughout *England* and *Wales*, as well as by all the Freemen in every City and Borough-Town; and 2. That hereby every Voter swears, in Words liable to no Evasion, That he has not received, *directly or indirectly, any Gift or Reward, or Promise of any.*

But (to pass over those godless and shameless Wretches, who frequently vote twice at one Election) How few are there, who can take this Oath with a Conscience void of Offence? Who have not receiv'd, *directly or indirectly, any Gift or Promise of any*? No! have not you? If you have received nothing else, have not you received Meat or Drink? And did you pay for the Meat or Drink you receiv'd? If not, that was a Gift; and consequently, you are as really *perjured*, as the Man that has received an hundred Pounds.

What a melancholy Prospect is then before us! Here are almost *all the common People* of any Substance throughout the Land, both in the City and Country, calling God to record to a *known, wilful Falshood!*

13. I shall conclude this Head in the weighty Words of the Author before cited.

"Most of these, I am afraid, look upon their
 "Oaths as *Things of course*, and little to be regard-
 "ed. But can there be any thing in the World
 "more sacred than an *Oath*? Is it not a solemn
 "Appeal to God for your Sincerity? And is not that
 "very Appeal an Acknowledgment, that he will
 "surely punish Falshood? Nay further, Is it not a
 "calling down the Vengeance of God upon your-
 "selves if you are false? Do you not, by laying your
 "Hand upon the Gospel, declare, That you hope
 "for no Salvation by Christ, if you perform not
 "what you then promise, or, if what you then affirm,

" is not true? And do not the Words, *So help me*
 " GOD, sufficiently prove, that the Intention of your
 " Oath is so? And that if you swear false, you are
 " to expect no Mercy from God, either in this World
 " or the next? And do you not *personally* and ex-
 " pressly give your Consent to this heavy Curse, by
 " *kissing the Book*? How then dare any of you ven-
 " ture to play with so awful an Engagement? Is it
 " that you think the Oath of a *Grand Jury-man*, or
 " *Parish-Officer*", (of a *Captain*, an *Officer of the*
Customs, or a *Voter* in Elections) " is not as sacred
 " and binding as that of an *Evidence at the Bar*?
 " What is it can make the Difference? Both of them
 " are equally Appeals to God, and Imprecations of
 " his Vengeance upon *wilful Perjury*."

14. If there be then a God that is not mocked, what a
 Weight of Sin lies on this Nation? And Sin of no
 common Dye; for Perjury has always been accounted
 one of the deepest-Stain. And how will any one at-
 tempt to excuse this? By adding Blasphemy thereto? So
 indeed some have done; saying, like those of old,
Tush, thou GOD carest not for it. The Lord seeth
(i. e. regardeth) us not. The Lord hath forsaken the
Earth. He has left second Causes to take their
Course, and Man in the Hand of his own Counsel.

How many are they who now speak thus? According
 to whose *Minute Philosophy*, the *Particular Providence*
 of God is utterly exploded, *the Hairs of our Head*
are no longer numbered: And not only a *Sparrow*, but a
 City, an Empire may fall to the Ground, *without the*
Will or Care of our heavenly Father. You allow then
 only a *General Providence*. I do not understand the
 Term. Be so kind as to let me know, what you
 mean by a " a *General Providence*, contradistinguish'd
 " from a *Particular one*? " I doubt you are at a
 Loss for an Answer; unless you mean some huge,
 unwieldy thing, (I suppose, resembling the *Primum*
Mobile in the *Ptolemaick System*) which continually
 whirls the whole Universe round, without affecting
 one thing more than another. I doubt this Hypo-
 thesis will demand more Proof, than you are at pre-

sent able to produce ; beside that it is attended with a thousand Difficulties, such as you cannot readily solve. It may be therefore your wisest Way for once to think with the Vulgar, to acquiesce in the plain, scriptural Account. This informs us, that altho' God dwelleth in Heaven, yet he still *ruleth over all* : That his Providence extends to every Individual in the whole System of Beings which he hath made : That all *natural Causes* of every kind, depend wholly upon his Will ; and he increases, lessens, suspends or destroys their Efficacy, according to his own good Pleasure : That he uses *preternatural Causes* at his Will, the Ministry of good or of evil Angels : And that he hath never yet precluded himself from exerting his own immediate Power, from *speaking* Life or Death into any of his Creatures ; from *looking* a World into Being, or into nothing.

Thinkest thou then, O Man, that thou shalt escape the Judgment of this great GOD ? O no longer treasure up unto thyself Wrath, against the Day of Wrath ! Thou canst not recall what is past ; but now keep thyself pure, even were it at the Price of all that thou hast ; and acknowledge the Goodness of God, in that he did not long since cut thee off, and send thee to thy own Place.

15. The *Jews* of old were charged by God, with *profaning his Sabbaths* also. And do we *Christians* come behind them herein ? (I speak of those who acknowledge the Obligation.) Do we *call the Sabbath a Delight, holy of the Lord, honourable ? Not doing our own Ways, nor finding our own Pleasure, nor speaking our own Words ?* Do our *Man-servant and Maid-servant* rest thereon ? And the *Stranger that is within our Gates* ? Is no Business, but what is really necessary, done within our House ? You know in your own Conscience, and God knoweth, that the very reverse of this is true.

But setting aside these things which are done as it were by Stealth, whether by mean or honourable Men ; how many are they, in every City, as well as in this, who profane the Sabbath with a high Hand ?

How

How many in this, that openly defy both God and the King, that break the Laws both divine and human, by working at their Trade, delivering their Goods, receiving their Pay, or following their ordinary Business, in one Branch or another, and *wiping their Mouth and saying, "I do no Evil?"* How many buy and sell on the Day of the Lord, even in the open Streets of this City? How many open or (with some modesty) *half open* their Shops? And when they have not the Pretence of perishable Goods; without any Pretence at all, Money is their God, and Gain their Godliness. — But what are all these Drovers in the Skirts of the Town, that well nigh cover the Face of the Earth? Till they drop one after another into the numerous Receptacles prepar'd for them in every Corner. What are these to gain by profaning the Day of the Lord? Nothing at all. They *drink in Iniquity like-Water*. Nay, many of them *pay* for their Sin; perhaps great Part of what should sustain their Family the ensuing Week. I know not what is *finding our own Pleasure, or doing our own Ways*, if this is not. What then shall we plead in *your* Excuse? That "Many others do it as well as *you*?" Nay, Number is so far from extenuating your Fault, that it aggravates it above measure. For this is open War against God. A whole Army of you joins together, and with one Consent, in the Face of the Sun, *runs upon the thick Bosses of his Buckler*.

16. It is once mentioned in the Prophets, *In thee (Jerusalem) they have set light by Father and Mother*. But frequent mention is made of their setting light by their Civil Parents, of their Murmurings and Rebellions, against their Governors. Yet surely *our* boasting against them is excluded, even in this Respect. For do not all our Histories witness such a Series of Mutinies, Seditions, Factions and Rebellions, as are scarce to be parallel'd in any other Kingdom, since the World began? And has not the wild, turbulent, ungovernable Spirit of our Countrymen, been continually acknowledged and lamented, (as abundance of their

Writings

Writings testify to this Day) by the cool, rational Part of the Nation? Terrible Effects whereof have been seen and felt, more or less, in every Generation.

But did this Spirit exist only in Times past? Blessed be God, it is now restrained; it does not break out; but the Traces thereof are still easy to be found. For whence springs this continual *speaking evil of dignities*? Of all who are at the Helm of publick Affairs? Whence this *speaking evil of the Ruler of our People*, so common among all Orders of Men? I do not include those whose Province it is to inspect all the publick Administrations. But is not almost every private Gentleman in the Land, every Clergyman, every Tradesman; yea, every Man or Woman that has a Tongue, a Politician, a Settler of the State? Is not every Car-man and Porter abundantly more knowing than the King, Lords and Commons together? Able to tell you all their Foibles, to point out their Faults and Mistakes, and how they ought to proceed, if they will save the Nation? Now all this has a natural, undeniable Tendency to Mutiny and Rebellion. O what need have we, above any Nation on Earth, of his continual Care and Protection, who alone is able to *rule the Raging of the Sea*, and *still the Madness of the People*.

17. But to proceed. Were there *Drunkards* in *Ephraim*, mighty to drink Wine, Men of Strength to mingle strong Drink? And are there not in England? Are they not the Growth of every County, City and Town therein? These do not indeed, or not often rise up early, that they may follow strong Drink; and so continue till Night, till Wine inflame them. They have found a readier Way; namely, to begin at Night, and continue following their Wine or strong Drink till the Morning. And what Numbers are there of these throughout the Land? Lost to Reason and Humanity, as well as to Religion: So that no Wonder they regard not the Work of the Lord, neither consider the Operation of his Hands.

• N. B. This was wrote a Year ago.

Nor

Nor indeed have our Drunkards need to continue from Morning to Night, until Wine inflame them: Seeing they have found a far more compendious Method of casting aside all Sense and Reason, and disincumbering themselves from all Remains, either of Conscience or Understanding. So that whatever Work of Darkness is speedily to be done, and that without any Danger of being interrupted, either by Fear, Compassion or Remorse, they may be in a few Moments, by one Draught as effectually qualified for it, as if they cou'd swallow a Legion of Devils. Or, (if that be all their Concern) they may, at a moderate Expence, destroy their own Body as well as Soul, and plunge thro' this liquid Fire, into that prepared for the Devil and his Angels.

Friend! Stop! You have the Form of a Man still. And perhaps some Remains of Understanding. O may the merciful God lay hold of that! Unto Him all Things are possible. Think a little, for once. What is it you are doing? Why shou'd you destroy yourself? I cou'd not use the worst Enemy I have in the World, as you use yourself. Why shou'd you murder yourself Inch by Inch? Why shou'd you burn yourself alive? O spare your own Body at least; if you have no Pity for your Soul! But have you a Soul then? Do you really believe it? What, a Soul that must live for ever? O spare thy Soul! Do not destroy thy own Soul with an everlasting Destruction! It was made for God. Do not give it into the Hands of that old Murderer of Men! Thou canst not stupify it long. When it leaves the Body, it will awake and sleep no more. Yet a little while, and it launches out into the great Deep, to live and think and feel for ever. And what will cheer thy Spirit there, if thou hast not a Drop of Water to cool thy Tongue? But the Dye is not yet cast. Now cry to God, and Iniquity shall not be thy Ruin.

18. Of old Time there were also those that were at ease in Zion, that lay upon Beds of Ivory, and stretched themselves upon their Couches, that eat the Lambs out of the Flock, and Calves out of the Stall. But how inelegant were these antient Epicures! Lambs out of the Flock, and Calves out of the Stall? Were these the best.

best Dainties they cou'd procure? How have we improved, since *Jeroboam's* Time? Who can number the Varieties of our Tables? Or the Arts we have, "To enlarge the Pleasure of Tasting." And what are their Couches, or Beds of Ivory, to the Furniture of our Apartments? Or their *Chains and Bracelets, and Mantles and changeable Suits of Apparel*, to the Ornaments of our Persons? What Comparison is there between their Diversions and Ours? Look at *Solomon* in all his Glory; and yet may we not question, whether he was not an utter Stranger to the *Pleasures of the Chase*? And notwithstanding his 40000 Horses, did he ever see a *Race* in his Life? He made *Gardens and Orchards, and Pools of Water*; he planted *Vineyards and built Houses*. But had he one *Theatre* among them all? No. This is the Glory of later Times. Or had he any Conception of a *Ball, an Assembly, a Masquerade, or a Ridotto*? And who imagines that all his Instruments of Musick put together, were any more to be compared to Ours, than his or his Father's rumbling *Hebrew Verses*,

"To the soft Sing-Song of *Italian Lays*."

In all these Points, our Preheminence over the *Jews*, is much every Way.

Yea, and over our own Ancestors as well as theirs. But is this our Glory or our Shame? Were *Edward the Third, or Henry the Fifth* to come among us now, what wou'd they think of the Change in their People? Wou'd they applaud the elegant Variety at the *Old Baron's Table*? Or the costly Delicacy of his Furniture and Apparel? Wou'd they listen to these Instruments of Musick? Or find Pleasure in those Diversions? Wou'd they rejoice to see the Nobles and Gentry of the Land, lying at ease, stretching themselves on Beds of Down? Too delicate to use their own Limbs, even in the Streets of the City; to bear the Touch of the People, the Blowing of the Wind, or the shining of the Sun! O how wou'd their Hearts burn within them! What Indignation, Sorrow, Shame must they feel, to see the

ancient Hardiness lost, the *British* Temperance, Patience and Scorn of Superfluities, the rough, indefatigable Industry, exchanged for Softness, *Idleness and Rulness of Bread!* Well for them, that they were gathered unto their Fathers, before this Exchange was made!

19. To prove at large, That the Luxury and Sensuality, the Sloth and Indolence, the Softness and Idleness, the Effeminacy and false Delicacy of our Nation are without a Parallel, wou'd be but lost Labour. I fear, we may say, the *Lewdness* too; For if the *Jeros*, as the Prophet speaks, *asssembled themselves by Troops in the Harlots's Houses*, so do the *English*, and much more abundantly. Indeed, where is *Male Chastity* to be found? Among the Nobility? Among the Gentry? Among the Tradesmen? Or among the Common People of *England*? How few lay any Claim to it at all? How few desire so much as the Reputation of it? Wou'd you yourself account it an Honour or a Reproach, to be rank'd among those of whom it is said, *These are they which were not defiled with Women; for they are Virgins?* And how numerous are they now, even among such as are accounted Men of Honour and Probity, who *are as fed Horses, every one neighing after his Neighbour's Wife?*

But as if this were not enough, is not the Sin of Sodom too, more common among us than ever it was in *Jerusalem*? Are not our Streets beset with those Monsters of Uncleaness, who *burn in their Lust one toward another, whom God hath given up to a reprobate Mind, to do those Things which are not convenient?* O Lord, thy Compassions fail not: Therefore we are not consumed.

20. Neither do we yield to Them in *Injustice* any more than *Uncleaness*. How frequent are open Robberies among us? Is not the *Act of Violence* even in our Streets? And what Laws are sufficient to prevent it? Does not *Theft* of various Kinds abound in all Parts of the Land, even tho' Death be the Punishment of it? And are there not among us, who *take Usury and Increase*, who *greedily gain of their Neighbour by Extortion?*

tion? Yea, whole Trades which subsist by such Extortion, as was not named either among the *Jews* or *Heathens*? Is there not yet the scant Measure, the wicked Balances, and the Bag of deceitful Weights? Beside the thousand nameless Ways of over-reaching and defrauding, the Craft and Mystery of every Trade and Profession. It were an endless Task to descend to Particulars, to point out in every Circumstance, how not only *Sharppers* and *Gamesters*, (those Public Nufances, those Scandals to the *English* Nation) but high and low, rich and poor, Men of Character and Men of none, in every Station of Public or Private Life, *have corrupted themselves*, and generally applaud themselves, and count it *Policy* and *Wildom* so to do: So that if *Gain* be at Hand, they care not tho' *Justice stand afar off*: So that *he which departeth from Evil*, which cometh not into their Secret, still maketh himself a Prey; and the *Wicked* still devoureth the Man that is more righteous than he.

And what Redress? Suppose a Great Man to oppress the Needy? Suppose the Rich grinds the Face of the Poor: What Remedy against such Oppression can he find in this *Christian* Country? If the one is Rich and the other Poor, doth not *Justice stand afar off*? And is not the Poor under the utmost Improbability, (if not Impossibility) of obtaining it? Perhaps the Hazard is greater among us, than either among *Jews*, *Turks* or *Heathens*.

For Example. Suppose a Great Man, with or without Form of Law, does wrong to his Poor Neighbour. What will you do? Sue his Lordship at Common Law? Have the Cause tried at the next Sessions or Assizes? Alas! Your own Neighbours, those who know the whole Case, will tell you, "You are out of your Senses." "But twelve Good Men and True will do me Justice." Very well: But where will you find them: Men unbiass'd, incapable of Corruption, Superior both to Fear and Favour, to every View whether of Gain or Loss? But this is not all; they must not only be good and true, but wise and understanding Men. Else how easy is it for a skilful Pleader to throw a

Mist before their Eyes? Even supposing too the Judge to be quite impartial, and Proof against all Corruption. And shou'd all these Circumstances concur, (of which I fear, there are not many Precedents) Supposing a Verdict is given in your Favour, still you have gained nothing. The Suit is removed into a higher Court, and you have all your Work to begin again. Here you have to struggle with all the same Difficulties as before, and perhaps, many new ones too. However, if you have Money enough, you *may* succeed: But if that fails, your Cause is gone. Without Money, you can have no more Law; Poverty alone utterly shuts out Justice.

But cannot an Honest Attorney procure me Justice? An Honest Attorney! Where will you find one? Of those who are called *exceeding Honest Attorneys*, who is there that makes any Scruple,

1. To promote and encourage *Needless Suits*, if not *Unjust* ones too?

2. To defend a *bad Cause*, knowing it so to be:

By making a *Demur*, and then withdrawing it:

By pleading some *false Plea*, to the Plaintiff's Declaration:

By putting in an *Evasive Answer* to his Bill:

By *protracting* the Suit, if possible, till the Plaintiff is ruin'd:

3. To carry a Cause not amounting to Ten Shillings into *Westminster-Hall*, by laying it in his Declaration as above Forty:

4. To delay his own Client's Suit knowingly and wilfully, in order to gain more thereby:

5. To draw himself the Pleadings or Conveyances of his Client, instead of giving them to be drawn by able Council:

6. To charge his Client with the Fees which shou'd have been given to such Council, altho' they were not given:

7. To charge for drawing Fair Copies, where none were drawn.

8. To charge Fees for Expedition given to Clerks, when not one Farthing has been given them:

9. To

9. To send his Clerk a Journey (longer or shorter) to do Business with or for different Persons; and to charge the *Horse-hire and Expence* of that Journey, to every Person severally:

10. To send his Clerk to *Westminster*, on the Business of ten (it may be) or twenty Persons, and to charge each of those Twenty for his Attendance, as if he had been sent on Account of one only.

11. To charge his own Attendance in like Manner: And

12. To fill up his Bill with *Attendances, Fees and Term-Fees*, tho' his Client is no whit forwarder in his Cause.

This is He that is called an *Honest Attorney*! How much *Honest* is a Pick-pocket?

But there is a Magistrate whose peculiar Office it is, to redress the Injured and Oppress'd. Go then and make Trial of this Remedy; Go, and tell your Case to the *Lord Chancellor*. Hold; you must go on regularly: You must tell him your Case, in *Form of Law*, or not at all. You must therefore *file a Bill* in Chancery, and retain a Lawyer belonging to that Court. "But you have already spent all you have; you have no Money." Then I fear you will have no Justice. You stumble at the Threshold. If you have either lost or spent all, your Cause is naught: It will not even come to a Hearing. So, if the Oppressor has secured all that you had, he is as safe as if you was under the Earth.

17. Now what an amazing Thing is this! The very *Greatness* of the Villany, makes it beyond *Redress*!—But suppose he that is oppress, has some Substance left, and can go thro' all the Courts of Justice, what Parallel can we find among *Jews, Turks or Heathens*, for either the *Delays* or the *Expence* attending it? With regard to the former, How monstrous is it, That in a Suit relating to that Inheritance, which is to furnish you and your Family with Food and Rayment, you must wait Month after Month, perhaps Year after Year, before it is determin'd, whether it be yours or not? And what are you to eat, or to wear in the mean time? Of that the Court takes no Cognizance! Is not this

this very *Delay*, (suppose there were no other Grievance attending the *English* Course of Law) wrong beyond all Expression? Contrary to all Sense, Reason, Justice and Equity? A *Capital* Cause is tried in one Day, and finally decided at once. And, *is the Life* less than *Meat*? Or *the Body* of less Concern than *Rayment*? What a shameless Mockery of Justice then, is this putting off *Pecuniary* Causes from Term to Term, yea, from Year to Year?

With regard to the latter. A Man has wrong'd me of a hundred Pounds. I appeal to a Judge for the Recovery of it. How astonishing is it, that this Judge himself cannot give me what is my Right, and what evidently appears so to be, unless I first give, perhaps one half of the Sum, to Men I never saw before in my Life!

22. I have hitherto supposed, That all Causes when they are decided, are decided according to Justice and Equity. But is it so? Ye Learned in the Law, is no *unjust* Sentence given in your Courts? Have not the same Causes been decided quite opposite Ways? One Way, this Term, just the contrary, the next? Perhaps one Way in the Morning (this I remember an Instance of) and another Way in the Afternoon. How is this? Is there no *Justice* left on Earth? No Regard for Right or Wrong? Or have Causes been puzzled so long, that you know not now what is either wrong or right? What is agreeable to Law, or contrary to it? I have heard some of you frankly declare, That it is in many Cases next to impossible to know, what is Law, and what is not. So are your *Folio's* of Law multiplied upon you, that no Human Brain is able to contain them; No; nor any consistent Scheme, or Abstract of them all.

But is it really owing to *Ignorance* of the Law, (this is the most *favourable* Supposition) that so few of you scruple taking *Fees* on either Side, of almost any Cause that can be conceived? And that you generally plead in the Manner you do on any Side of any Cause? Rambling to and fro, in a Way so abhorrent from Common Sense, and so utterly foreign to the Question? I have been amazed at hearing the Pleadings of some eminent

eminent Council: And when it has fallen out that the Pleader on the other Side, understood only the Common Rules of Logick, he has made those eminent Men appear, either such egregious Knaves, if they cou'd help it, or such egregious Blockheads, if they cou'd not; that one wou'd have believ'd they wou'd shew their Face there no more.—Meantime, if there be a God that judgeth righteously, what horrid Insults upon him are these! *Shall I not wist for these Things, saith the Lord? Shall not my Soul be avenged of such a Nation as this!*

22. There is one Instance more of (I know not what to term it) Injustice, Oppression, Sacrilege, which hath long cried aloud in the Ears of God. For among Men, who doth hear? I mean the Management of many of those who are intrusted with our *Publick Charities*. By the pious Munificence of our Forefathers, we have Abundance of these, of various Kinds. But is it not glaringly true, (to touch only on a few Generals) that the Managers of many of them, either 1. Do not apply the Benefaction to *that Use* for which it was designed by the Benefactor, or 2. Do not apply it with such *Care and Frugality*, as in such a Case are indispensably required: Or 3. Do not apply the *Whole* of the Benefaction, to any *charitable Use* at all; but *secrete* Part thereof, from Time to Time, for the Use of themselves and their Families. Or, lastly, by plain, bare-faced Oppression, *exclude* those from having any Part in such Benefaction, who dare (tho' with all possible Tenderness and Respect) set before them the Things that they have done.

“ Yet Brutus is an Honourable Man :

“ So are they All ; All Honourable Men !

And some of them, had in Esteem for Religion ; accounted Patterns both of Honesty and Piety ! But God seeth not as Man seeth. He shall repay them to their Face. Perhaps, even in the present World. For that Scripture is often still fulfill'd, *This is the Curse that goeth forth over the Face of the whole Earth. I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of Hosts, and it shall enter into the House of the Thief,* (such he is and no better,

better, in the Eyes of God, no whit Honefter than a Highwayman) and it shall remain in the Midst of the House, and shall consume it, with the Timber thereof, and the Stones thereof.

23. And is not Truth, as well as Justice, fallen in our Streets? For who speaketh the Truth from his Heart? Who is there, that makes a Conscience of speaking the Thing as it is, whenever he speaks at all? Who scruples the telling of *Officious Lies*? The varying from Truth, in order to do Good? How strange does that Saying of the antient Father, sound in modern Ears, "I wou'd not tell a Lie, no, not to save the Souls of the whole World." Yet is this strictly agreeable to the Word of God; to that of St. Paul in particular, *If any say, let us do Evil that Good may come, their Damnation is just.*

But how many of us do this Evil, without ever considering, whether Good will come or no? Speaking what we do not mean, merely out of Custom, because it is *fashionable* so to do? What an immense Quantity of Falshood does this ungodly Fashion occasion Day by Day? For hath it not over-run every Part of the Nation? How is all our Language swoln with *Compliment*? So that a well bred Person is not expected to speak as he thinks: We do not look for it at his Hands. Nay, who wou'd thank him for it? How few wou'd suffer it? It was said of old, even by a Warrior and a King, *He that telleth Lies shall not tarry in my Sight?* But are not we of another Mind? Do not we rather say, *He that telleth not Lies, shall not tarry in my Sight?* Indeed the Trial seldom comes; for both Speakers and Hearers are agreed, That Form and Ceremony, Flattery and Compliment shou'd take Place, and Truth be banished from all that *know the World.*

And if the Rich and Great have so small Regard to Truth, as to lie, even for Lying-sake, what Wonder can it be, that Men of lower Rank will do the same thing for Gain? What Wonder that it should obtain, as by common Consent, in all Kinds of *Buying and Selling*? Is it not an adjudged Case, That it

is no Harm to tell Lies in the Way of Trade? To say, that is the lowest Price which is not the lowest; or that you will not take what you do take immediately? Insomuch that it is a Proverb even among the *Turks*, when ask'd to abate of their Price, "What! do you take me to be a Christian?" So that never was that Caution more seasonable than it is at this Day, *Take ye heed every one of his Neighbour, and trust ye not in any Brother: For every Brother will utterly supplant, and they will deceive every one his Neighbour.*

24. And as for those few who abstain from Outward Sins, is their Heart right with God? May he not say of us also (as of the *Jews*) *This People is uncircumcised in Heart?* Are not you? Do you then love the Lord your GOD, with all your Heart, and with all your Strength? Is he your God and your All? The Desire of your Eyes? The Joy of your very Heart? Rather, do you not set up your Idols in your Heart? Is not your Belly your God? Or your Diversion? Or your fair Reputation? Or your Friend? Or Wife? Or Child? That is plainly, do not you delight in some of these earthly Goods, more than in the God of Heaven? Nay, perhaps you are one of those groveling Souls, that pant after the Dust of the Earth! Indeed, who does not? Who does not get as much as he can? Who of those that are not accounted covetous, yet does not gather all the Money he can fairly, and perhaps much more? For are they those only whom the World ranks among Misers, that use every Art to increase their Fortune? Toiling early and late, spending all their Strength in loading themselves with thick Clay? How long? Until the very Hour when God calleth them; when he saith unto each of them, *Thou Fool! this Night shall thy Soul be required of thee! And whose shall those Things be which thou hast prepared?*

25. And yet doth not our Pride, even the Pride of those whose Soul cleaves to the Dust, testify against us? Are they not wise in their own Eyes, and prudent in their own Conceit? Have not Writers of our own remarked,

remarked, that there is not upon Earth a more *self-conceited* Nation than the *English*; more opiniated both of their own *national* and *personal* Wisdom, and Courage and Strength. And indeed, if we may judge by the Inhabitants of *London*, this is evident to a Demonstration: For what Inhabitant of the Metropolis does not suppose himself to have a *Metropolitick* Understanding? Are not the very meanest of them able to instruct both the King and all his Counsellors? What Cöbler in *London* is not wiser than the Principal Secretary of State? What Coffee-house Disputant is not an abler Divine than his Grace of *Canterbury*? And how deep a Contempt of others is join'd with this high Opinion of our selves? I know not whether the People of all other Nations are greater Masters of Dissimulation; but there does not appear in any Nation whatever, such a Proneness to despise their Neighbour: To despise not Foreigners only (near Two thousand Years ago they remarked *Britannos Hospitibus feros*) but their own Countrymen; and that very often for such surprizing Reasons, as nothing but undeniable Fact could make credible. How often does the Gentleman in his Coach despise those *dirty Fellows that go a-foot*? And these, on the other hand, despise full as much those *lazy Fellows that loit in their Coaches*. No Wonder then that those who have the *Form of Godliness* should despise them that have not: That the Saint of the World so frequently says to the gross Sinner, in Effect if not in Terms, *Stand by thy self; come not near unto me; for I am holier than thou!*

26. Yet what Kind of Holiness is this? May not God justly declare of us also, *This People draw near me with their Mouth, but they have removed their Hearts far from me. They do but flatter me with their Mouth, and dissemble with me in their Tongue. Is it not so with you?* When you speak to God, do your Lips and your Heart go together? Do you not often utter Words by which you mean just nothing? Do not you say and unsay? Or, say one thing to God, and another to Man? For Instance, you say to God, *Piousness,*

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep me this Day without Sin. But you say to Man, This cannot be done; it is all Folly and Madness to expect it. You ask of God, That you may perfectly love him, and worthily magnify his holy Name: But you tell Man, There is no perfect Love upon Earth; it is only a Madman's Dream. You pray God, to cleanse the Thoughts of your Heart, by the Inspiration of his holy Spirit. But you assure your Neighbour, there is no such thing as Inspiration now, and that none pretend to it but Enthusiasts. What gross Hypocrisy is this! Surely you think, there is no Knowledge in the Most High. O be not deceived, GOD is not mocked. But whatsoever you sow, that also shall ye reap!

27. Such at present is the Religion of this Christian Nation! So do we honour him by whose Name we are called. And yet was there ever a Nation more careless and secure? More unapprehensive of the Wrath of God! How can a Man more effectually expose himself to the Ridicule of those who are esteemed Men of Understanding, than by shewing any Concern, as if the Judgments of God were hanging over our Heads? * Surely then a deceived Heart hath turned us aside, that we cannot say, Is there not a Lie in my Right hand? Surely this our Confidence is not of God: It is rather a judicial Infatuation; a stupid Insensibility; a deep Sleep, the Fore-runner of heavy Vengeance.

“Ruin behind it stalks, and empty Desolation.”

Surely never was any People more fitted for Destruction! *Impudent Children are they, and stiff-hearted. Are they ashamed when they have committed Abomination? When they have openly profaned the Day of the Lord? When they have committed Lewdness? Or when they have utter'd such Curses and Blasphemies, as are not heard of among the Heathens? Nay, They are not at all ashamed, neither can they blush.* And tho' God send unto them all his Servants, rising up early and sending them, yet will

* N. B. This was wrote a Year ago, but I am afraid it is too true, even at this Day.

they

they not bear; they harden their Neck; they do worse than their Fathers.

What then can God do more for his Vineyard which he hath not done? He hath long tried us with Mercies, giving Rain and fruitful Seasons, filling us with the Flower of Wheat. We have had Plenty of all things; and while War roar'd around, Peace has been in all our Borders. But still *this revolting and rebellious People* said not, *Let us now fear the Lord our GOD.* Nay, they gave him no Thanks for all his Mercies; they did not even acknowledge them to be his Gift. They did not see the Hand of God in any of these things; they could account for them another Way. O ye Unwise, when will ye understand? Know ye not yet, there is a God that ruleth the World? What did ye see with your Eyes? Was the Race to the Swift, or the Battle to the Strong? Have ye forgotten *Dettin* already? Does not *England* know that God was there? — Or suppose your Continuance in Peace, or Success in War, be the mere Result of your own Wisdom and Strength; do ye command the Sun and the Clouds also? Can ye pour out or stay the Bottles of Heaven? But let it all be Nature, Chance, any thing—so God may have no Hand in governing the Earth!

28. Will his Judgments bring us to a better Mind? Do we hear the Rod, and him that has appointed it? Let us observe: What Fruit do we find in those who are even consumed by means of his heavy Hand? Let any that desires to be clearly satisfied herein visit the Hospitals of this City. Let him judge for himself, how the Patients there receive God's fatherly Visitation; especially *there*, because Mercy also is mix'd with Judgment; so that it is evident the Lord loveth whom he chasteneth. Go then into any Ward, either of Men or Women; look narrowly from one End to the other: Are they humbling themselves under the Hand of God? Are they trembling under a Sense of his Anger? Are they praising him for his Love? Are they exhorting one another, not to faint when they are rebuked of him? How do nine in ten of them

them spend the Time, that important Time from Morning to Evening ? Why in such a Manner, that you would not easily learn, from thence, whether they were Christians, Pagans or Mahometans.

Is there any deeper Distress than this to be found ? Is there a greater Affliction than the Loss of Health ? Perhaps there is ; the Loss of Liberty, especially as it is sometimes circumstanced. You may easily be convinced of this, by going into either *Ludgate* or *Newgate*. What a Scene appears, as soon as you enter ! The very Place strikes Horror into your Soul. How dark and dreary ! How unhealthy and unclean ! How void of all that might minister Comfort ! But this is little, compared to the Circumstances that attend the being confined in this Shadow of Death. See that poor Wretch, who was formerly in want of nothing, and encompassed with Friends and Acquaintance, now cut off, perhaps by an unexpected Stroke, from all the cheerful Ways of Men ; ruin'd, forsaken of all, and delivered into the Hands of such Masters and such Companions ! I know not, if to one of a thinking, sensible Turn of Mind, there could be any thing like it on this Side Hell.

What Effect then has this heavy Visitation of God, on those who lie under it for any Time ? There is, perhaps, an Exception here and there ; but in general, they are abandon'd to all Wickedness, utterly divested of all Fear of God, and all Reverence to Man ; insomuch, that they commonly go out of that School completely fitted for any Kind or Degree of Villany, perfectly brutal and devilish, thoroughly furnish'd for every evil Word and Work.

29. Are our Countrymen more effectually reclaim'd, when Danger and Distress are join'd ? If so, the *Army*, especially in Time of War, must be the most Religious Part of the Nation. But is it so indeed ? Do the *Soldiery* walk as those who see themselves on the Brink of Eternity ? Redeeming every Opportunity of glorifying God, and doing Good to Men, because they know not the Hour in which their Lord will require their Souls of them ? So far from it, that a
Soldier's

Soldier's Religion is a By-word, even with those who have no Religion at all; that Vice and Profaneness in every Shape reign among them without controul; and that the whole Tenor of their Behaviour speaks, *Let us eat and drink, for To-morrow we die.*

Have those who are exposed to still more Danger, the *English Sea-Forces*, more Religion than those at Land? It is said, they were once remarkable for this: And it is certain *Sir Francis Drake* fear'd God, as did most of his Commanders; and we have Reason to believe, his Mariners and Sailors too. But what shall we say of the *Navy* that now is, more particularly of the Ships of War? Is Religion there? Either the Form or the Power? Is not almost every single *Man of War* a mere floating Hell? Where is there to be found more consummate Wickedness, a more full, daring Contempt of God, and all his Laws, except in the bottomless Pit? But here Description fails: And the Goodness of God endureth yet daily! But *shall I not visit for these Things, saith the Lord? Shall not my Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?* O that the Prospect of national Judgments may suffice! That we may remember ourselves and turn unto the Lord our God, before his long-suffering Mercy is at an end, and he pours out the Vials of his Wrath upon us!

But how small Ground have we as yet to hope for this? For who will now *suffer the Word of Exhortation*? How few will endure sound Doctrine, and the honest, close Application of it? Do they not say unto the Seers, *see not*; and unto the Prophets, *prophesy smooth things*? And if a Man will do thus, if he will *sew Pillows to all Arm-Holes*, and *cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before them*; if he will *prophesy of Wine and strong Drink*, he shall even be the Prophet of this People.

28. I am sensible, how nice a Subject this is, and how extremely difficult it is so to speak, as neither to say too little nor too much, neither more nor less than the Cause of God requires. I know also, That it is absolutely impossible, so to speak as not to give Offence.

sence. But whosoever is offended I dare not be silent; neither may I refrain from Plainness of Speech: Only I will endeavour to use all the Tenderness I can, consistently with that Plainness.

In tender Love then I ask, are there none among us (I speak to you, my Brethren, who are Priests and Prophets of the Lord, set apart to *minister in holy Things*, and to *declare the Word of the Lord*) Are there none among us who commit *Lewdness*, as did those by whom *Israel was defiled*? Hath not the Lord seen an horrible Thing, in some of the Prophets of this Land also, even, that *they commit Adultery*, and (to conceal it) *walk in Lies*? God forbid that I should affirm this. I only propose (not maintain) the Question. If there be such a Wretch, I pray God to strike him to the Heart, and to say, *Thou art the Man!*

Are there none of you, like them, *mighty to drink Wine*, *Men of Strength to mingle strong Drink*? Yea, are there none, that *err thro' strong Drink*, that are *swallowed up of Wine*? Are there not found those who say, *I will fetch Wine*, and *we will fill ourselves with strong Drink*; And to morrow shall be as this Day, and much more abundant?

Alas, my Brother! Is this the Voice of a Minister of Christ? A Steward of the Mysteries of God? Suppose you find at any Time Trouble and Heaviness, is there no Help for you in your God? Is not the God whom you serve able to deliver you from any Plague or Trouble? Is the being drunk with Wine a better Relief, than the being filled with his Spirit? Do you not understand this? Do you not know the Lord? Take heed you do not destroy both your own Soul and them that hear you! O beware! If you know not his Love, fear his Power! Make haste to flee from the Wrath to come; lest he smite you with a Curse great as your Sin, and sweep you away from the Face of the Earth.

32. Can such as you be said, to honour or fear God, any more than those spoken of by Malachi? May not God complain, *These Priests have violated my Law and profaned my Holy Things*. Yea whensoever you presume with those unhallow'd Hands, to touch the My-

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teries of God : Whensoever you utter his Name or his Word with those unhallow'd Lips ! But is it on this Account only that God may say, *Both Prophet and Priest are profane ?* May he not add, *they have put no Difference between the Holy and the Profane ; therefore I am profaned among them.* For is it not so ? Do you put a Difference between the Holy and the Profane, him that feareth God, and him that feareth him not ? Do you put an effectual Difference between them, even in the most solemn Office of our Religion ? At the Table of the Lord, do you take care to *separate the Precious from the Vile ?* To receive all those who (as you may reasonably believe) *draw near with penitent Hearts and lively Faith ;* and utterly to reject those who testify against themselves, That they are without Hope and without God in the World ?

Nay, who dares repel one of the Greatest Men in his Parish from the Lord's Table ? Even tho' he be a Drunkard or a common Swearer ? Yea, tho' he openly deny the Lord that bought him ? Mr. *Stonehouse* did this once. But what was the Event ? The Gentleman brought an Action against him, for the Terror of all such insolent Fellows, in succeeding Times. And who was able and willing to espouse the Cause ? He alone who took it into his own Hand : And before the Day when it should have been tried here, called the Plaintiff to answer at a higher Bar.

33. O my Brethren, is it not for want of your making this Difference, as well as for many other Abominations, that with regard to some among us, (how many God knoweth) that Scripture is now also fulfilled, *His Watchmen are blind, they are ignorant, they are Shepherds that cannot understand.*—*The Lord hath poured out upon them the Spirit of deep Sleep, and hath closed their Eyes ; the Prophets and the Seers hath he covered. And the Vision of all is become unto you as the Words of a Book that is sealed ; which Men deliver to one that is learned saying, Read this, I pray thee ; and he saith I cannot ; for it is sealed.*

If you ask what those other Abominations are ? I will speak, in Love and in the Spirit of Meekness.

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There are found among us covetous Men, Men who mind earthly Things, who seek themselves and not Christ crucified, who love the World and the Things of the World: Men in whom those Words are still fulfilled, *Who is there among you that would shut the Doors for nought? Neither do ye kindle Fire on my Altar for nought. I have no Pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts.* Yea, are there not those at this Day, (O that I might be found to fear where no Fear is!) who make themselves fat with the chiefest of all the Offerings of Israel? Are there not those, who now enlarge their Desire as Hell, who are as Death and cannot be satisfied? Who, tho' they want neither Food to eat nor Rayment to put on, yet seek more and more Preferment? Who are continually studying to join House to House, and to lay Field to Field? To grow rich in the Service of that Master, who himself had not where to lay his Head? Is it not so these that those dreadful Words belong, enough to cause the Ears of him that heareth to tingle, *They are greedy Dogs which can never have enough; they all look to their own Way, (not the Way of their Lord) every one for his Gain, from his Quarter.*

Is it strange, if among these there should be some, who are cruel, *oppressive Men*? Inasmuch as Covetousness knows no Mercy, nor can a Lover of Money be a Lover of his Neighbour. Have not some been known, even to grind the Face of the Poor? To strip, rather than cloath the Naked? Some who while they cried out, *as the Horse-leech, give, give,* would take, if it was not given; like those of old who said, *Thou shalt give it me now, and if not, I will take it by Force:* Or those spoken of by Micah, *The Prophets bite with their Teeth and cry Peace;* and he that putteth not into their Mouths, they even prepare War against him. Very great, is the Sin of these Men before the Lord. If there be ten such now in the Land, may God smite them this Day with Terror and Attonishment, that they may have no Rest in their Bones till their Sin is done away!

34. Are you as watchful and zealous to gain Souls, as those are to gain the Gold that perisheth? Do you know

know by Experience what that meaneth, *the Zeal of thine House hath eaten me up?* Or, are you One of those Watchmen who do not watch at all? Who neither know nor care when the Sword cometh? Of whom the Prophet saith, *They are dumb Dogs that cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.*

Can it be supposed, That such Shepherds will feed the Flock? Will give to every one his Portion of Meat in due Season? Will these warn every Man, and exhort every Man, that they may present every Man perfect in Christ Jesus? Will they take care to "know all their Flock by Name, not forgetting the Men-servants and the Women-servants?" Will they enquire into the State of every Soul, committed to their Charge? And watch over each with all Tenderness and Long-suffering, as they that must give account? Marking how they either fall or rise? How these wax weary and faint in their Mind; and those grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Who can do this, unless his whole Heart be in the Work? Unless he desire nothing but to spend and be spent for them; and count not his Life dear unto himself; so he may present them blameless in the Day of the Lord Jesus.

Can any Shepherd do this (and if he do it not, he will never give an Account with Joy) who imagines, he has little more to do, than to preach once or twice a Week? That this is the main Point, the chief Part of that Office, which he hath taken upon himself before God? What gross Ignorance is this? What a total Mistake of the Truth? What a miserable Blunder touching the whole Nature of his Office? It is indeed a very great thing, To speak in the Name of God; it might make him that is the stoutest of Heart tremble, if he considered, That every time he speaks to others, his own Soul is at Stake. But great, inexpressibly great as this is, it is perhaps the least Part of our Work. To seek and save that which is lost, to bring Souls from Satan to God, to instruct the Ignorant, to reclaim the Wicked, to convince the Gainfayer; to direct their Feet into the Way of Peace, and then keep them therein; to follow them Step by Step, least they turn

out of the Way, and advise them in their Doubts and Temptations; to lift up them that fall, to refresh them that are faint, and to comfort the weak-hearted: to administer various Helps, as the Variety of Occasions require, according to their several Necessities: These are Parts of our Office; all this we have undertaken, at the Peril of our own Soul. A Sense of this made that holy Man of old cry out, "I marvel if any Ruler in the Church shall be saved." And a greater than him say, in the Fulness of his Heart, *Who is sufficient for these Things?*

35. But *who is not sufficient for these Things, for the taking care of a Parish, tho' it contain twenty thousand Souls, if this implies no more than the taking care to preach there, once or twice a-week; and to procure one to read Prayers on the other Days, and do what is call'd the Parish-duty?* Is any Trade in the Nation so easy as this? Is not any Man sufficient for it, without any more Talents either of Nature or Grace, than a small Degree of common Understanding? But O! what manner of Shepherds are those, who look no farther into the Nature of their Office, who sink no deeper into the Importance of it than this! Were they not such as these concerning whom the Word of the Lord came unto Ezekiel, saying, *We be to the Shepherds that do feed themselves: Should not the Shepherds feed the Flocks? Ye eat the Fat, and ye cloathe you with the Wooll; but ye feed not the Flock. The Diseased have ye not strengthen'd, neither have ye heal'd that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken; neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost. And they were scatter'd, because there was no Shepherd, and they became Meat to all the Beasts of the Field. Yea, my Flock was scatter'd upon all the Face of the Earth, and none did search or seek after them.*

I conjure you, Brethren, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, who hath bought them and us with his own Blood, Apply this each to his own Soul. Let every Man look unto GOD, and say, Lord, Is it I? Am I one of these idle, careless,

less, indolent Shepherds, that feed myself, not the Flock? Am I one that cannot bark, slothful, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber? Those who have not strengthen'd that which was diseased, neither healed that which was sick? *Search me, O Lord, and prove me; try out my Reins and my Heart. Look well if there be any Way of Wickedness in me, and lead me in the Way everlasting.*

36. Have I not, at least, *healed the Heart of thy People slightly?* Have I not said, *Peace, Peace, when there was no Peace?*—How many are they also that do this? Who do not study to speak what is *true*, especially to the Rich and Great, so much as what is *pleasing*? Who flatter *honourable Sinners*, instead of telling them plain, *How can ye escape the Damnation of Hell?* O what an Account have you to make, if there be a GOD that judgeth the Earth? Will he not require at your Hands the *Blood* of all these Souls, of whom ye are the *Betrayers and Murderers*? Well spake the Prophets of your Fathers, in whose Steps ye now tread. *They have seduced my People, and one built up a Wall, and another dawb'd it with untemper'd Mortar. They strengthen the Hands of the Evil-Doers, that none doth return from his Wickedness. They prophesy Lies in my Name, saith the Lord. They say unto them that despise me, Ye shall have Peace, and unto them that walk after the Imagination of their own Heart, no Evil shall come upon you.*

How great will your Damnation be, who *destroy* Souls, instead of *saving* them? Where will you appear, or how will you stand, in that great and terrible *Day of the Lord*? How will ye lift up your Head, when the Lord descends from Heaven, in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on his Adversaries! More especially on those who have so betrayed his Cause, and done Satan's Work under the Banner of Christ! With what Voice wilt thou say, "Behold me, Lord, and the Sheep whom thou hadst given me, whom I gave to the Devil, and told them they were in the Way to Heaven, till they dropp'd into Hell?"

Were they not just such Shepherds of Souls as you are, concerning whom GOD spake by *Jeremiah*: *Many Pastors have destroy'd my Vineyard, they have trodden my Portion under foot; they have made my pleasant Portion, a desolate Wilderness*: By *Ezekiel*, *There is a Conspiracy of her Prophets, like a roaring Lion, ravening the Prey, they have devoured Souls*: And by *Zechariah*, *Thus saith the Lord, Feed the Flock of the Slaughter, whose Possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty; and they that sell them say, Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich; and their own Shepherds pity them not*.

37. Is not this the real Ground, the principal Reason, of the present Contempt of the Clergy? And long since was it assigned as such, by him who cannot lie. The same Men of old, who made the Lord's People to transgress, thereby made themselves vile. They were despised both as the Natural Effect, and the Judicial Punishment of their Wickedness. And the same Cause the Prophet observes to have produced the same Effect, many hundred Years after this. *Ye are departed out of the Way, saith the Lord; ye have caused many to stumble—Therefore have I also made you contemptible, and base before all the People*.

I have now, Brethren, delivered mine own Soul, and in so doing, I have (as I proposed at first) used great Plainness of Speech, as not studying to please Men, but the Lord. The Event I leave to him in whose Name I have spoken, and who hath the Hearts of all Men in his Hand.

I have brought you heavy Tidings this Day, and yet I cannot but be persuaded, that some of you will not count me your Enemy, because I tell you the Truth. O that all of us may taste the Good Word which we declare! May receive that Knowledge of Salvation, which we are commanded to preach unto every Creature, thro' the Remission of Sins! My Heart's Desire is, That all of us, to whom is committed the Ministry of Reconciliation, may ourselves be reconciled to God, thro' the Blood of the everlasting Covenant: That He may be henceforth unto us a God, and we may be unto Him a People: That we may all know, as well

well as *preach*, the Lord, *from the least unto the greatest*: Even by that Token, *I am merciful to thy Unrighteousness: Thy Sins I remember no more!*

III. 1. I have hitherto spoken more immediately to those, who profess themselves Members of the Church of England. But inasmuch as I am a Debtor also to those who do not, my Design is now to apply to them also; and briefly to shew, wherein (I fear) they are severally inconsistent with *their own Principles*.

I begin with those who are at the smallest Distance from us, whether they are term'd *Presbyterians* or *Independents*; Of whom in general I cannot but have a widely different Opinion, from that I entertain'd some Years ago: As having since then conversed with many among them, *in whom the Root of the Matter is undeniably found*; and who labour to keep a Conscience void of Offence both toward GOD and toward Man. I cannot therefore doubt, but every Serious Man, of either one or the other Denomination, does utterly condemn all that Inward as well as Outward Unholiness, which has been above described.

But do you, as a People, avoid what you condemn? Are no Whoremongers or Adulterers found among you? No Children disobedient to their Parents? No Servants that are slothful or careless? That answer again? That do not honour *their Masters as is meet in the Lord*? Are there none among you that censure or *speak Evil of the Ruler of their People*? Are there no Drunkards, no Gluttons, no Luxurious Men, no regular Epicures, none whose Belly is their God, who, as their Fortune permits, *sare sumptuously every Day*? Have you no Dishonest Dealers, no Unfair Traders, no Usurers or Extortioners? Have you no Liars, either for Gain, or for Good Manners, so called? Are you clear of Ceremony and Compliment? Alas, you are sensible, in most, if not all these Respects, you have now small Preheminence over us.

How much more sensible must you be of this, if you do not rest on the Surface, but enquire into the Bottom of Religion, the Religion of the Heart? For,

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what inward Unholiness, what evil Tempers are among us, which have not a Place among you also; You likewise bewail that Ignorance of GOD, that Want of Faith and of the Love of GOD and Man, that inward Idolatry of various Kinds, that Pride, Ambition and Vanity, which rule in the Hearts even of those who still have the *Form of Godliness*. You lament before GOD, the deep Covetousness that *eats so many Souls as doth a Gangrene*; and perhaps are sometimes ready to cry out, *Help, Lord, for there is scarce one godly Man left. Lay to thine Hand; for the Faithful are minish'd from the Children of Men!*

2. And yet you retain the *Truth that is after Godliness*, at least, as to the Substance of it. You own what is laid down in Scripture, both touching the *Nature and Condition of Justification and Salvation*. And with *Regard to the Author of Faith and Salvation*, you have always avowed, even in the Face of your Enemies, That it is GOD which *worketh in us, both to will and to do, of his good Pleasure*: That it is his Spirit alone who *teacheth us all things*, all we know of the deep things of GOD: That every true Believer has an *Unction from the Holy One*, to lead him into all necessary Truth: That *because we are Sons, GOD sendeth forth the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts, crying Abba, Father*; and that *this Spirit beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of GOD*.

How is it then, my Brethren (so I can call you now, although I could not have done it heretofore;) how is it, that the generality of you also are fallen from your Stedfastness? In the Times of Persecution ye stood as a Rock, tho' *all the Waves and Storms went over you*. But who can bear Ease and Fulness of Bread! How are you changed, since these came upon you! Do not many of you now (practically I mean) put something else, in the Room of *Faith that worketh by Love*? Do not some of you suppose, that Gravity and Composedness of Behaviour, are the main Parts of Christianity? Especially, provided they neither swear, nor take the Name of God in vain. Do not

not others imagine, that to abstain from idle Songs, and those Fashionable Diversions commonly used by Persons of their Fortune, is almost the Whole of Religion? To which if they add Family Prayer and a strict Observation of the Sabbath, then doubtless all is well! Nay, my Brethren, this is well, so far as it goes: But how little a Way does it go toward Christianity? All these things, you cannot but see, are merely *External*; whereas Christianity is an *Inward* Thing; without which the most beautiful Outward Form is lighter than Vanity.

Do not others of you rest in *Convictions*? Or Good *Desires*? Alas, what do these avail? A Man may be convinced he is sick, yea deeply convinced, and yet never recover. He may desire Food, yea with earnest Desire, and nevertheless perish with Hunger. And thus I may be convinced I am a Sinner; but this will not justify me before God. And I may desire Salvation (perhaps by Fits and Starts for many Years) and yet be lost for ever. Come close then to the Point, and keep to your Principles. Have you receiv'd the Holy Ghost? The Spirit which is of God, and is bestowed by him on all Believers, that we may know the Things which are freely given to us of GOD? The Time is short. Do you experience now that *Unction from the Holy One*? Without which, you confess *Outward* Religion, whether negative or positive, is nothing. Nay, and *Inward Conviction* of our Wants is nothing, unless those Wants are in fact supplied. Good *Desires* also are nothing, unless we actually attain what we are stirr'd up to desire. For still, if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, whatever he desires, *he is none of his*. O my Brother, beware you stop not short! Beware you never account yourself a Christian, no, not in the lowest Degree, till God hath sent forth the Spirit of Christ into your Heart, and that Spirit bear witness with your Spirit, that you are a Child of GOD.

3. One Step farther from us, are you who are called (tho' not by your own Choice) *Anabaptists*. The Smallness of your Number, compared to that either
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of the *Presbyterians*, or those of the *Church*, makes it easier for you to have an exact Knowledge of the Behaviour of all your Members, and to put away from among you every one that *walketh not according to the Doctrine you have received*.

But is this done? Do all your Members adorn the Gospel? Are they all *Holy as he which hath called us is Holy*? I fear not. I have known some Instances to the contrary; and doubtless you know many more. There are Unholy, Outwardly Unholy Men, in your Congregations also; Men that profane either the Name or the Day of the Lord; that do not honour their Natural or Civil Parents; that know not how to possess their Bodies in Sanctification and Honour; that are intemperate either in Meat or Drink, gluttonous, sensual, luxurious; that variously offend against Justice, Mercy or Truth, in their Intercourse with their Neighbour, and do not walk by that *Royal Law, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*.

But how is this consistent with your leading Principles "That no Man ought to be admitted to Baptism, till he has that Repentance whereby we forsake Sin, and living Faith in God through Christ?"

For if no Man ought to be *admitted* into a Church or Congregation, who has not actual Faith and Repentance, then neither ought any who has them not, to *continue* in any Congregation. And consequently, an open Sinner cannot remain among you, unless you practically renounce your main Principle.

4. I refer it to your own serious Consideration, whether one Reason, why unholy Men are still suffered to remain among you, may not be this; That many of you have unawares put *Opinion*, in the room of *Faith* and *Repentance*? But how fatal a Mistake is this? Supposing your Opinion to be true, yet a *True Opinion* concerning *Repentance* is wholly different from the thing itself. And you may have a *True Opinion* concerning *Faith* all your Life, and yet die an Unbeliever.

Supposing

Supposing therefore the *Opinion of Particular Redemption* true, yet how little does it avail toward Salvation? Nay, were we to suppose, That *none can be saved who do not hold it*, it does not follow, that *all will be saved who do*. So that if the one prov'd a Man to be in ever so *bad a State*, the other would not prove him to be in a *Good one*. And consequently, whosoever leans on this *Opinion*, leans on the *Staff of a broken Reed*.

Would to God that ye would mind this one thing. To make your own *Calling and Election sure*! That every one of you (leaving the rest of the World to him that made it) wou'd himself *repent, and believe the Gospel*! Not repent alone (for then you know only the Baptism of *John*) but believe and be *baptized with the Holy Ghost and with Fire*. Are you still a Stranger to that Inward Baptism, wherewith all true Believers are baptized? May the Lord constrain you to cry out, *How am I straiten'd till it be accomplish'd!* Even till the Love of God inflame your Heart, and consume all your vile Affections. Be not content with any thing less than this! It is this Loving Faith alone which opens our Way into the *General Church of the First-born, whose Names are written in Heaven*! Which giveth us to enter in within the *Veil, where Jesus our Fore-runner is gone before us!*

5. There is a still wider Difference in some Points, between us, and the People usually term'd *Quakers*. But not in these Points. You, as well as we, condemn all *Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men*; all those *Works of the Devil* which were recited above, and all those *Tempers* from which they spring.

You agree, That we are all to be *taught of GOD*; and to be *led by his Spirit*: That the Spirit alone *reveals* all Truth, and *inspires* all Holiness: That by his Inspiration Men attain *perfect Love*, the Love which *purifies them as he is pure*: And that thro' this Knowledge and Love of God, they have Power to *do always such things as please him*; to worship God, a Spirit, according to his own Will, that is, *in Spirit and in Truth*.

Hence you infer, That *Formal Worship* is not acceptable to GOD, but that alone that springs from GOD in the Heart: You infer also, that they who are led by him, will use great *Plainness of Speech*, and great *Plainness of Dress*, seeking no *Outward Adorning*, but only the *Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit*.

I will look no farther now, than simply to enquire, Whether you are consistent with these Principles?

To begin with the latter: "He that is led by the Spirit will use great Plainness of Speech."

You would have said, "will use the plain Language." But that Term leads you into a grand Mistake. That Term, "*the plain Language*," naturally leads you to think, of *one particular Way* of speaking; as if *Plainness of Speech* implied no more, than the Use of that *particular Form*.

Alas! my Friends! Know ye not, that your Ancestors designed this, only as a *Specimen of plain Language*. And is it possible, that you should mistake the Sample for the whole Bale of Cloth?

Consult the Light GOD has given you, and you must see, that *Plainness of Speech* does not lie in a *single Point*, but implies an open undisguised Sincerity, a child-like Simplicity in all we speak.

I do not desire you to refrain from saying *Thou* or *Thee*. I would not spend ten Words about it. But I desire you, whenever you speak at all, to speak the Truth, and nothing but the Truth. I desire your Words may be always the Picture of your Heart. This is truly *Plain Language*.

Either do not pretend to *Plain Speech* at all, or be *uniformly plain*. Are you so? I pray, consider. Do you never *compliment*? I do not suppose you say, "Sir, your very humble Servant." But do you say no *Civil Things*? Do you never *flatter*? Do you not *commend* any Man or Woman to their Face? Perhaps farther than you do behind their Back. Is this *Plainness of Speech*? Do you never *dissemble*? Do you speak to all Persons, high or low, rich or poor, just what you think, neither more nor less, and in the shortest and clearest Manner you can? If not, what a mere Jest is your
Plain

Plain Language? You carry your Condemnation in your own Breast.

6. You hold also, That " he which is led by the Spirit, will use great *Plainness of Dress*, seeking no outward adorning, but only the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit."

And that, in particular, " he will leave *Gold and costly Apparel*, to those who know not GOD."

Now I appeal to every serious, reasonable Man among you, Do your People act consistently with this Principle? Do not many of your Women wear *Gold* upon their very Feet? And many of your Men use *Ornaments of Gold*? Are you a Stranger to these Things? Have you not seen with your Eyes (such Trifles as will scarce bear the Naming) their *Ganets* and *Snuff-boxes* glitter, even in your solemn Assembly, while ye were waiting together upon GOD? Surely, they are not yet so lost to Modesty, as to pretend, That they do not use them by Way of Ornament. If they do not, if it be only out of Necessity, a *plain Oaken Stick* will supply the Place of the one, and a Piece of *Horn* or *Tin* will unexceptionably answer all the reasonable Ends of the other.

To speak freely (and do not count me your Enemy for this) you cannot but observe, upon cool Reflection, That you retain just so much of your *antient Practice*, as leaves your *Present* without Excuse; as makes the Inconsistency between the one and the other, glaring and undeniable. For Instance: This Woman is too strict a *Quaker*, to lay out a *Shilling* in a *Necklace*. Very well; but she is not too strict to lay out *four-score Guineas* in a *Repeating Watch*. Another would not for the World wear any *Lace*, no, not an *Edging* round her Cap. But she will wear *Point*; and sees no Harm in it at all, tho' it should be of twelve Times the Price. In one Kind of *Apron* or *Handkerchief* she dares not lay out twenty *Shillings*; but in another Sort, lays out twenty *Pounds*. And what Multitudes of you are very jealous, as to the *Colour* and *Form* of your Apparel, (the least important of all the Circumstances that relate to it) while in the most important,

they are without any Concern at all? They will not put on a *Scarlet* or *Crimson* Stuff, but the richest *Velvet*, so it be black or grave. They will not touch a colour'd *Ribband*; but will cover themselves with a *stiff Silk* from Head to Foot. They cannot bear *Purple*: But make no Scruple. at all of being cloth'd in *fine Linnen*: Yea, to such a Degree, That the *Linnen of the Quakers* is grown almost into a Proverb.

Surely you cannot be ignorant, that the Sinfulness of *fine Apparel*, lies chiefly in the *Expensiveness*. In that it is robbing God and the Poor: It is defrauding the Fatherless and Widow; it is wasting the Food of the Hungry, and withholding his Rayment from the Naked, to consume it on our own Lusts.

7. Let it not be said, That this affects only a few among you, and those, of the *younger* and *lighter* Sort. Yes it does; your Whole Body: For why do you, who are *Elder* and *Graver*, suffer such Things? Why do ye not vehemently reprove them? And if they repent not, in spite of all worldly Considerations, expel them out of your Society? In conniving at their Sin, you make it your own; you, especially who are *Speakers*. Do you say, "They cannot bear it; they will not hear:" Alas, into what State then are ye fallen! But whether they will bear it or no, what is that to Thee? Thou art to *speak*, *whether they will bear, or whether they will forbear*. To say the very Truth, I am afraid, you rather strengthen their Hands in their Wickedness. For you not only do not testify against it in the Congregation, but even sit at their Table and reprove them not. Why then, Thou also art one of *the dumb Dogs that cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber*.

I fix this Charge upon every *Speaker*, in particular, who saw a young Woman, Daughter to one of the *Quakers* in *London*, going to be married in Apparel suitable to her Diamond Buckle, which cost a hundred Guineas. Could you see this, and not call Heaven and Earth to witness against it? Then I witness against Thee, in the Name of the Lord, Thou art a *blind* Leader

Leader of the Blind: Thou straineſt a Gnat, and ſwalloweſt a Camel!

Verily the Sin both of Teachers and Hearers, is here-
in exceeding great. And the little Attempts toward
Plainneſs of Apparel, which are ſtill obſervable among
you (I mean, in the *Colour* and *Form* of your Cloaths;
and the *Manner* of putting them on) only teſtify againſt
you, That you were once what you know in your
Hearts you are not now.

8. I come now to your main Principle, “ We are
all to be *taught of GOD*, to be *inſpired*, and *led by his
Spirit*. And then we ſhall *worſhip* him, not with dead
Form, but in *Spirit* and in *Truth*.”

Theſe are deep and weighty Words. But many
hold faſt the Words, and are utterly ignorant of their
Meaning. Is not this an exceeding common Caſe?
Are you not conſcious, abundance of your Friends have
done ſo? With whom the being *taught of GOD* and
led by his Spirit, are mere Words of Courſe, that mean
juſt nothing. And their *crude* and *indigeſted* Accounts,
of the Things they did not underſtand, has raiſed that
deep Prejudice againſt theſe great Truths, which we
find in the generality of Men.

Do ſome of you aſk, “ But doſt thou acknowledge
the *Inward Principle*?” I do, my Friends: And I
wou’d to God every one of you acknowledged it
as much. I ſay, All Religion is either *empty Shew*,
or *Perfection by Inſpiration*; in other Words, The obe-
dient Love of God, by the ſupernatural Knowledge of
God: Yea, and that all which *is not of Faith is Sin*;
all which does not ſpring from this Loving Knowledge
of God; which Knowledge cannot begin, or ſubſiſt
one Moment, without *immediate Inſpiration*: Not on-
ly all Publick Worſhip, and all Private Prayer, but eve-
ry Thought, in Common Life, and Word and Work.
What think you of this? Do you not ſtagger? Dare
you carry the *inward Principle* ſo far? Do you ac-
knowledge it to be the very Truth? But alas! what
is the acknowledging it? Doſt thou experience this
Principle in thyſelf; What ſaith thy Heart? Does God
dwell therein? And doth it now eccho to the Voice

of GOD ? Hast thou the *continual Inspiration* of his Spirit, filling thy Heart with his Love, as with a Well of Water, springing up into Everlasting Life ?

9. Art thou acquainted with the *Leading of his Spirit*, not by Notion only, but by living Experience ? I fear very many of you talk of this, who do not so much as know what it means. How does the Spirit of GOD lead his Children, to this or that particular Action ? Do you imagine, it is by *Blind Impulse* only ? By *moving* you to do it, you know not why ? Not so. He leads us by our *Eye*, at least as much as by the *Hand* ; and by *Light* as well as by *Heat*. He *shows* us the Way wherein we should go, as well as *incites* us to walk therein. For Example. Here is a Man ready to perish with Hunger. How am I led by the Spirit to relieve him ? First, By his *convincing* me, it is the Will of GOD I should, and secondly, by his filling my Heart with *Love* toward him. Both this *Light* and this *Heat* are the Gift of GOD ; are wrought in me by the same Spirit : Who leads me, by this *Conviction* as well as *Love*, to go and feed that Man. This is the plain, rational Account of the *ordinary* Leading of the Spirit. But how far from that which some have given !

Art thou thus led by the Spirit to every good Word and Work ? Till GOD hath thereby made thy Faith perfect ? Dost thou know what *Faith* is ? It is a Loving, Obedient Sight of a present and reconciled GOD. Now where this is, there is no *Dead Form* ; neither can be, so long as it continues. But all that is said or done is full of GOD, full of Spirit and Life and Power.

10. But perhaps, as much as you talk of them, you do not know the Difference between *Form* and *Spirit* ; or between worshipping GOD in a *formal* Way, and worshipping him in *Spirit* and in *Truth*.

The Lord is that Spirit. The Seeing and Feeling and Loving him is *Spiritual Life*. And whatever is said or done in the Sight and Love of GOD, that is full of *Spirit and Life*. All beside this is *Form*, mere *dead Form* ; whether it be in our Publick Addresses to GOD,

or in our Private; or in our Worldly Business, or in our daily Conversation.

But if so, how poor and mean and narrow, have your Views and Conceptions been! You was afraid of *Formality in Publick Worship*. And Reason good. But was you afraid of it no where else? Did not you consider, That *Formality in Common Life*, is also an Abomination to the Lord? And that it can have no Place in any Thing we say or do, but so far as we forget GOD? O watch against it in every Place, every Moment, that you may every Moment see and love GOD; and consequently, at all Times and in all Places, worship him in *Spirit and in Truth*.

My Friends, permit me to add a few Words, in tender Love to your Souls. Do not you *lean* too much on the Spirit and Power, which you believe rested upon your *Forefathers*? Suppose it did; will that avail you, if you do not drink into the same Spirit? And how evident is this! That whatever ye once were, ye are now *short of your Strength*. Ye are weak and become like other Men. The Lord is well nigh departed from you. Where is now the Spirit, the Life, the Power? Be not offended with my plain Dealing, when I beseech you who are able to weigh Things calmly, to open your Eyes and see Multitudes even in the Church, pursuing, yea and attaining the *Substance* of Spiritual Life, and leaving unto you the *Shadow*. Nay a still greater Evil is before you. For if ye find not some effectual Means to prevent it, your rising Generation will utterly cast off, the *Shadow* as well as the *Substance*.

11. There is an abundantly greater Difference still, according to your own Account, between us who profess ourselves Members of the Church of *England*, and you who are Members of the Church of *Rome*. But notwithstanding this, do you not agree with us in condemning the Vices above recited? Profaneness, Drunkenness, Whoredom, Adultery, Theft, Disobedience to Parents, and such like? And how unhappily do you agree with us in *praising* the very Vices which you condemn?

And yet you acknowledge (nay and frequently contend for this with a peculiar Earnestness) That every Christian is called to be *zealous of good Works*, as well as to *deny himself and take up his Cross daily*. How then do you depart from your own Principles, when you are Gluttons, Drunkards or Epicures? When you live at your Ease, in all the Elegance and Voluptuousness of a plentiful Fortune! How will you reconcile the being adorned with Gold, array'd in Purple and fine Linnen, and faring sumptuously every Day, with the *denying yourself and taking up your Cross daily*? Surely while you indulge the Desire of the Flesh, the Desire of the Eye, and the Pride of Life, the excellent Rules of self-denial that abound in your own Writers, leave you of all Men most inexcusable.

12. Neither can this Self-indulgence be reconciled, with the being *zealous of good Works*. For by this needless and continual Expence, you disable yourself from doing Good. You bind your own Hands. You make it impossible for you to do that Good which otherwise you might. So that you injure the Poor in the same Proportion as you poison your own Soul. You might have cloath'd the Naked; but what was due to them, was thrown away on your own costly Apparel. You might have fed the Hungry, entertained the Stranger, relieved them that were sick or in Prison. But the Superfluities of your own Table swallowed up that whereby they should have been profited. And so this wasting of thy Lord's Goods, is an Instance of complicated Wickedness; since hereby thy poor Brother perisheth, for whom Christ died.

I will not recommend to you either the Writings or Examples of those whom you account *Hereticks*, (altho' some of these, if you could view them with impartial Eyes, might *provoke you to Jealousy*.) But O! that God would write in your Hearts, the Rules of Self-denial and Love, laid down by *Thomas à Kempis*! Or that you would follow both in this and in Good Works, that burning and shining Light of your own Church, the *Marquis de Renty*! Then would all who knew and loved the Lord rejoice to acknowledge you

as the Church of the living GOD : When ye were zealous of every good Word and Work ; and abstained from all Appearance of Evil : When it was hereby shewn that you were filled with the Holy Ghost, and delivered from all unholy Tempers : When ye were all *unblameable and unrebukeable, without Spot or Wrinkle or any such Thing ; a chosen Generation, a Royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People, shewing forth* to all Jews, Infidels and Hereticks, by your active, patient, spotless Love of God and Man, the Praises of Him who had called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light.

13. Men and Brethren, Children of the Stock of Abraham, suffer me to speak a few Words to you also : You who do not allow, That *Messiah the Prince* is already come and cut off. However, you thus far hear Moses and the Prophets as to allow, 1. That it is the *Inspiration of the Holy One, which giveth Man Understanding*, and that all the true Children of God are taught of GOD. 2. That the Substance both of the Law and the Prophets, is contained in that one Word, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy GOD with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength, and thy Neighbour as thyself*. And 3. That the sure Fruit of Love is Obedience, *ceasing from Evil and doing Good*.

And do you walk by this Rule ? Have you yourself that *Inspiration of the Holy One* ? Are you taught of God ? Hath he opened your Understanding ? Have you the Inward Knowledge of the Most High ? I fear not. Perhaps you know little more, even of the Meaning of the Words than a *Mahometan*.

Let us go a little further. Do you love the Lord your God with all your Heart, with all your Soul, with all your Strength ? Can you say, *whom have I in Heaven but Thee ; and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee* ? Do you desire God at all ? Do you desire to have any thing to do with him, till you can keep the World no longer ? Are you not content, so you enjoy the Good Things of Earth, to let God stand afar off ? Only calling upon him now and then, when you can't

can't well do without him. Why then you do not love God at all, tho' you will sometimes condescend to use him. You love the World. This possesses your Heart. This therefore is your God. You renounce the God of your Fathers, the God of Israel; you are still *uncircumcised in Heart*. Your own Conscience bears Witness, you no more hear Moses and the Prophets, than you do Jesus of Nazareth.

14. From Moses and the Prophets it has been shewn, that your Forefathers were a *faithless and stubborn Generation*; a Generation which set not their Hearts aright, and whose Spirit cleaved not *steadfastly unto GOD*. And this you acknowledge yourselves. If you are ask'd, How is it, that the Promise is not fulfill'd? Seeing the Scepter is long since departed from Judah, why is not *Shiloh* come? Your usual Answer is, "Because of the Sins of our Fathers, God hath delay'd his coming". Have you then reformed from the Sins of your Fathers? Are you turned unto the Lord your God? Nay; Do ye not tread in the same Steps? Bating that single Point of Outward Idolatry, what Abomination did they ever commit, which you have not committed also? Which the Generality of you do not commit still, according to your Power? If therefore the Coming of the *Messiah* was hinder'd by the Sins of your Forefathers, then by same Rule, your Continuance therein will hinder his Coming to the End of the World.

Brüthren, my Heart's Desire and Prayer to GOD is, That he would *gather the Outcasts of Israel*. And I doubt not, but when the Fulness of the Gentiles is come in, then all Israel shall be saved. But mean Time, is there not great Cause that ye should say with Daniel, O Lord, Righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us Confusion of Face, as at this Day, to the Men of Judah, and unto all Israel. O Lord, we have sinned, we have rebelled against thee, neither have we obeyed the Voice of the Lord our GOD. Yet, O our GOD, incline thine Ear and hear; open thine Eyes and behold our Desolations; for we do not present our Supplications before thee for our Righteousnesses, but for thy great
Mercy.

*Mercies. O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive ! O Lord
 hearken and do, Defer not, for thine own Sake ; for
 thy City and thy People are called by thy Name.*

15. I cannot conclude without addressing myself to you also, who do not admit either the *Jewish or Christian* Revelation. But still you desire to be happy : You own the essential Difference between Vice and Virtue ; and acknowledge, (as did all the wiser *Greeks and Romans*) that Vice cannot consist with Happiness. You allow likewise that Gratitude and Benevolence, Self-knowledge and Modesty, Mildness, Temperance, Patience and Generosity, are justly numbered among Virtues ; and that Ingratitude and Malice, Envy and Ill-nature, Pride, Insolence and Vanity, Gluttony and Luxury, Covetousness and Discontent, are Vices of the highest Kind.

Now let us calmly inquire, how far *your* Life is consistent with your Principles.

You seek Happiness. But you find it not. You come no nearer it with all your Labours. You are not happier than you was a Year ago. Nay, I doubt you are more unhappy. Why is this, but because you look for Happiness there, where you own it cannot be found ? Indeed, what is there on Earth which can long satisfy a Man of Understanding ? His Soul is too large for the World he lives in. He wants more Room.

*Æstuat infelix angusto limite Mundi,
 Ut brevibus clausus Gyaris, parvaque Seripho.*

He has already travelled thro' all which is called Pleasure ; Diversions, and Entertainments of every Kind. But among these he can find no Enjoyment of any Depth ; they are empty, shallow, superficial Things ; they pleased for a while, but the Gloss is gone ; and now they are dull and tasteless. And what has he next ? Only the same things again. For this World affords nothing more. It can supply him with no Change. Go, feed again : But it is upon one Dish still.

Still. Thus,

Occidit miseros erambe repetita.

Yet what Remedy under the Sun !

16. The sounder Judgment, the stronger Understanding you have, the sooner are you fated with the World : And the more deeply convinced, all that cometh is Vanity ; Foolish, Infipid, Nauseous. You see the Foibles of Men in so much clearer a Light, and have the keener Sense of the Emptiness of Life. Here you are, a poor, unsatisfied Inhabitant, of an unquiet World ; turning your weary Eyes on this Side and on that Side ; seeking Rest, but finding none. You seem to be *out of your Place* : Neither the Persons nor Things that surround you are *such as you want*. You have a confused Idea of *something* better than all this ; but you know not where to find it. You are always *gasping* for *something* which you cannot attain, no, not if you range to the uttermost Parts of the Earth.

But this is not all. You are not only *negatively* unhappy, as finding nothing whereon to stay the Weight of your Soul ; but *positively* so, because you are Unholy : You are miserable, because you are vicious. Are you not vicious ? Are you then full of Gratitude to Him, who giveth you Life and Breath, and all Things ? Not so ; you rather spurn his Gifts, and murmur at him that gave them. How often has your Heart said, God did not use you well ? How often have you question'd either his Wisdom or Goodness ? Was this well done ? What Kind of Gratitude is this ? It is the best you are Master of. Then take Knowledge of yourself. Black Ingratitude is rooted in your inmost Frame. You can no more love God than you can see him ; or than you can be Happy without that Love.

Neither (how much soever you may pique yourself upon it) are you a Lover of Mankind. Can Love and Malice consist ? Benevolence and Envy ? O do not put out your own Eyes. And are not these
horrid

horrid Tempers in you ? Do not you envy one Man, and bear Malice or Ill-will to another ? I know you call these Dispositions by softer Names ; but Names change not the Nature of Things. You are pained that one should enjoy what you cannot enjoy yourself. Call this what you please, it is rank Envy. You are grieved, that a second enjoys even what you have yourself ; you rejoice in seeing a third unhappy. Do not flatter yourself ; this is Malice, venomous Malice, and nothing else. And how could you ever think of being happy, with Malice and Envy in your Heart ? Just as well might you expect to be at Ease, while you held burning Coals in your Bosom.

17. I intreat you to reflect, whether there are not other Inhabitants in your Breast, which leave no Room for Happiness there. May you not discover, thro' a thousand Disguises, Pride ? Too high an Opinion of yourself ? Vanity, Thirst of Praise, even (who would believe it ?) of the Applause of Knaves and Fools ? Unevenness or Sourness of Temper ? Proneness to Anger or Revenge ? Peevishness, Fretfulness, or pining Discontent ? Nay, perhaps even Covetousness.—And did you ever think, Happiness could dwell with these ? Awake out of that senseless Dream. Think not of reconciling things incompatible. All these Tempers are essential Misery. So long as any of these are harboured in your Breast, you must be a Stranger to Inward Peace. What avails it you, if there be no other Hell ? Whenever these Fiends are let loose upon you, you will be constrain'd to own,

“ Hell is where'er I am : Myself am Hell !

And can the Supreme Being love those Tempers, which you yourself abhor in all but yourself ? If not, they imply Guilt as well as Misery. Doubtless they do. Only inquire of your own Heart. How often in the mid Career of your Vice have you felt a secret Reproof, which you knew not how to bear, and therefore stifled as soon as possible ?

18. And did not even *this* point at an Hereafter? a future State of Existence? The more reasonable among you have no Doubt of this; you do not imagine the whole Man dies together;—Altho' you hardly suppose the Soul, once disengaged, will dwell again in an House of Clay. But how will *your* Soul subsist without it? How are *you* qualified for a separate State? Suppose this Earthly Covering, this Vehicle of Organiz'd Matter, whereby you hold Commerce with the Material World, were now to drop off! Now, what will you do in the Regions of Immortality? You cannot eat or drink there. You cannot indulge either the Desire of the Flesh, the Desire of the Eye, or the Pride of Life. You love only worldly things; and they are gone, fled as Smoke, driven away for ever. Here is no Possibility of sensual Enjoyments; and you have a Relish for nothing else. O what a Separation is this, from all that you hold dear! What a Breach is made, never to be healed!

But beside this, you are unholy; full of evil Tempers; for you did not put off these with the Body. You did not leave Pride, Revenge, Malice, Envy, Discontent behind you, when you left the World. And now you are no longer chear'd by the Light of the Sun, nor diverted by the Flux of various Objects. But those Dogs of Hell are let loose to prey upon your Soul, with their whole, unrebated Strength. Nor is there any Hope, that your Spirit will now ever be restor'd to its original Purity: Not even that poor Hope of a purging Fire, so elegantly described by the *Hesiod* Poet, some Ages before the Notion was revived among the Doctrines of the *Romish* Church.

— *Aliae tenduntur inanes
Suspensae ad ventos; aliis sub gurgite vasto
Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni—
Donec longa dies, exacto tempore orbi,
Concretam exemit labem, purumque reliquit
Aethereum sensum atque auras simplicis ignem.*

19. What a great Gulph then is fix'd between you and Happiness, both in this World and that which is to come? Well may you shudder at the Thought! More especially when you are about to enter on that untried State of Existence. For what a Prospect is this, when you stand on the Verge of Life, ready to launch out into Eternity? What can you then think? You see nothing before you. All is dark and dreary. On the very best Supposition, how well may you address your parting Soul in the Words of dying *Adrian*;

" Poor, little, pretty, fluttering Thing,
Must we no longer live together?
And dost thou prune thy trembling Wing,
To take thy Flight thou know'st not whither?

Thy pleasing Vein, thy hum'rous Folly
Is all neglected, all forgot;
And pensive, wavering, melancholy,
Thou hop'st, and fear'st thou know'st not what."

" Thou know'st not what! " Here is the Sting, suppose there were no other. To be *thou know'st not what!* Not for a Month, or a Year, but through the countless Ages of Eternity! What a tormenting Uncertainty must this be? What racking Unwillingness must it occasion, to exchange even this known Vale of Tears, for the unknown Valley of the Shadow of Death?

" And is there no Cure for this? " Indeed there is an effectual Cure; even the Knowledge and Love of GOD. There is a Knowledge of GOD which *unveils* Eternity, and a Love of GOD, which *endears* it. That Knowledge makes the great Abyss *visible*; and all *Uncertainty* vanishes away. That Love makes it *amiable* to the Soul, so that *Fear* has no more Place; But the Moment GOD says, by the welcome Angel of Death, " Come Thou up hither," She

" Claps the glad Wing, and Towers away,
And mingles with the Blaze of Day."

20. See ye not, what Advantage every Way, a *Christian* has over you? Probably the Reason you saw it not before was, because you knew none but *nominal* Christians; Men who profess'd to *believe* more (in their Way of believing) but had no more of the Knowledge or Love of GOD than yourselves. So that with regard to Real, *Inward Religion*, you stood upon even Ground. And perhaps in many Branches of *Outward Religion*, the Advantage was on your Side.

May the Lord, the GOD of the Christians, either reform these Wretches, or take them away from the Earth! That lay this grand Stumbling-block in the Way of those, who desire to know the Will of GOD!

O ye who desire to know his Will, regard them not! If it be possible, blot them out of your Remembrance.

They neither *can* nor *will* do you any Good. O suffer them not to do you Harm. Be not prejudiced against Christianity by those, who know nothing at all of it. Nay, they condemn it, all *real, substantial* Christianity; they speak evil of the Thing they know not. They have a kind of *cant* Word for the whole Religion of the Heart. They call it *Enthusiasm*.

I will briefly lay before you the Ground of the Matter, and appeal to you yourselves for the Reasonableness of it.

21. What a miserable Drudgery is the Service of GOD, unless I love the GOD whom I serve? But I cannot love one whom I know not. How then can I love GOD till I know him? And how is it possible I should know GOD, unless he make himself known unto me? By *Analogy* or Proportion? Very good. But where is that Proportion to be found? What Proportion does a Creature bear to its Creator? What is the Proportion between Finite and Infinite?

I grant, the *Existence* of the Creatures demonstratively shews the *Existence* of their Creator. The whole Creation speaks, that there is a GOD. But that is not the Point in question. I know there is a GOD. Thus far is clear. But who will shew me, what that GOD is. The more I reflect the more convinced I am, that it is not possible for any or all the Creatures, to take off the

Veil

Veil which is on my Heart, that I may discern this unknown GOD; to draw the Curtain back which now hangs between, that I may see him which is invisible.

This Veil of Flesh now hides him from my Sight. And who is able to make it transparent! So that I may perceive thro' this Glass, GOD always before me, till I see him *Face to Face*.

I want to know this great GOD who filleth Heaven and Earth: Who is above, beneath, and on every Side, in all Places of his Dominion; who just now be-sets me behind and before, and lays his Hand upon me. And yet I am no more acquainted with him, than with one of the Inhabitants of *Jupiter* or *Saturn*.

O my Friend, how will you get one Step farther, unless GOD reveal himself to your Soul?

22. And why should this seem a thing incredible to you? That GOD, a Spirit, and the Father of the Spirits of all Flesh, should discover himself to your Spirit, which is itself, the Breath of GOD, *Divina Particula Auræ*? Any more than that material Things should discover themselves to your material Eye. Is it any more repugnant to Reason, that Spirit should influence Spirit, than that Matter should influence Matter? Nay, is not the former the more easily intelligible of the two? For there is the utmost Difficulty in conceiving, how Matter should influence Matter at all. How that which is totally *passive* should *act*. Neither can we rationally account either for Gravitation, Attraction, or any natural Motion whatsoever, but by supposing in all the Finger of GOD, who alone conquers that *Vis inertiae* which is essential to every Particle of Matter, and worketh all in all.

Now if GOD should ever open the Eyes of your Understanding, must not the Love of GOD be the immediate Consequence? Do you imagine you can see GOD, without loving him? Is it possible, in the Nature of Things? *Si virtus conspiceretur oculis*, said the old Heathen, *mirabiles amores excitaret sui*. How much more if you see him who is the original Fountain, the great Archetype of all Virtue, will that Sight raise in you a

Love that is wonderful, such as the gay and busy World know not of !

23. What Benevolence also, what tender Love to the whole of Human Kind, will you drink in, together with the Love of God, from the unexhausted Source of Love ? And how easy is it to conceive, that more and more of his Image will be then transfused into your Soul ? That from disinterested Love, all other Divine Tempers will, as it were naturally, spring ? Mildness, Gentleness, Patience, Temperance, Justice, Sincerity, Contempt of the World ; yea, whatsoever Things are venerable and lovely, whatsoever are justly of good Report.

And when you thus love God and all Mankind, and are transform'd into his Likeness, then the Commandments of God will not be grievous ; you will no more complain, that they destroy the Comfort of Life. So far from it, that they will be the very Joy of your Heart ; Ways of Pleasantness, Paths of Peace ! You will experience here that solid Happiness, which you had elsewhere sought in vain. Without servile Fear or anxious Care, so long as you continue on Earth you will gladly do the Will of God here, as the Angels do it in Heaven. And when the Time is come that you shou'd depart hence, when God says, " Arise and " come away," you will pass with Joy unspeakable out of the Body, into all the Fulness of God.

Now does not your own Heart condemn you, if you call *this Religion Enthusiasm* ? O leave that to those blind Zealots, who tack together a Sett of Opinions and an outside Worship, and call this poor, dull, lifeless Thing, by the sacred Name of *Christianity*. Well might you account *such Christianity* as this, a mere Piece of empty Pageantry, fit indeed to keep the Vulgar in awe, but beneath the Regard of a Man of Understanding.

But in how different a Light does it now appear ? If there be such a Religion as I have sketch'd out, must not every reasonable Man see, there is nothing on Earth to be desired in comparison of it ?—But if any
Man

Man desire this, let him ask of God: He giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not.

24. May you not ask, quite consistently with your Principles, in some Manner resembling this:

O thou Being of Beings, thou Cause of All, thou seest my Heart; thou understandest all my Thoughts. But how small a Part of thy Ways do I understand! I know not what is above, beneath, on every Side. I know not my own Soul. Only this I know, I am not what I ought to be. I see and approve the Virtue which I have not. I do not love Thee, neither am I thankful. I commend that Love of Mankind; but I feel it not. Thou hast seen Hatred, Malice, Envy in my Heart. Thou hast seen Anger, Murmuring, Discontent. These uneasy Passions harrow up my Soul. I cannot rest, while I am under this Yoke. Nor am I able to shake it off. I am unhappy, and that thou knowest.

Have Compassion upon me, Thou whose Years do not fail! On me, who have but a short Time to live. I rise up, and am cut down as a Flower. I flee as it were a Shadow. Yet a little while, and I return to Dust, and have no more Place under the Sun.

Yet I know thou hast made my Soul to live for ever. But I know not where; and I am unwilling to try. I tremble, I am afraid to go thither, whence I shall not return. I stand quivering on the Edge of the Gulph; for Clouds and Darkness rest upon it. O God! *Must* I go always "creeping with Terrors, and plunge into "Eternity with a Peradventure!"

O thou Lover of Men, is there no Help in Thee? I have heard (what indeed my Heart cannot conceive) that thou revealest thyself to those that seek Thee, and pourest thy Love into their Hearts: And that they who know and love thee, walk thro' the Shadow of Death and fear no Evil. O that this were so! That there were such an unspeakable Gift, given to the Children of Men! For then might I hope for it. O God, if there be, give it unto *Me*! Speak, that I may see thee! Make thyself known unto *me* also, in

the Manner that thou knowest! In any wise let me know thee and love thee, that I may be form'd after thy Likeness! That I may be Love, as thou art Love; that I may now be happy in thee; and when Thou wilt, fall into the Abyfs of thy Love, and enjoy thee thro' the Ages of Eternity!

The End of Part II.



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A

FARTHER APPEAL

To MEN of
REASON and RELIGION.

PART III.

*And when he came near, he beheld the City, and wept
over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at
least in this thy Day, the Things which belong unto thy
Peace ! Luke xix. 41, 42.*



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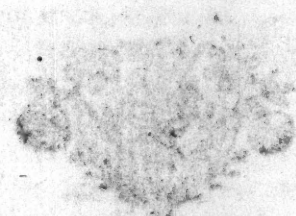
FARTHER APPLA

TO MEN OF

REASON AND RELIGION.

PART II

It is the duty of every man to be a Christian, and to be a Christian is to be a man of reason and religion. It is the duty of every man to be a Christian, and to be a Christian is to be a man of reason and religion. It is the duty of every man to be a Christian, and to be a Christian is to be a man of reason and religion.



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A
FARTHER APPEAL
To MEN of
REASON and RELIGION.
PART III.

I. 1. **N**OW, what can an impartial Person think concerning the Present State of Religion in England? Is there a Nation under the Sun which is so deeply fallen, from the very *First Principles* of all Religion? Where is the Country, in which is found so utter a Disregard to even *Heathen Morality*? Such a thorough Contempt of *Justice*, and *Truth*, and all that should be dear and honourable to rational Creatures.

What Species of *Vice* can possibly be named, even of those that Nature itself abhors, of which we have not had, for many Years, a plentiful and still increasing Harvest? What *Sin* remains either in *Rome* or *Constantinople*, which we have not imported long ago (if it was not of our native Growth) and improved upon ever since? Such a *Complication* of Villanies of every Kind, consider'd with all their *Aggravations*, such a *Scorn* of whatever

whatever bears the Face of *Virtue*, such *Injustice*, *Fraud* and *Falseness*: Above all, such *Perjury*, and such a *Method of Law*, we may defy the whole World to produce.

What Multitudes are found throughout our Land, who do not even *profess* any Religion at all? And what Numbers of those who *profess much*, confute their Profession by their *Practice*? Yea, and perhaps by their exorbitant Pride, Vanity, Covetousness, Rapaciousness or Oppression, cause the very Name of Religion, to stink in the Nostrils, of many (otherwise) Reasonable Men?

2. "However, we have many thousands still, of truly *Virtuous* and *Religious Men*." Wherein does their Religion consist? In *Righteousness* and True Holiness? In Love stronger than Death? Fervent Gratitude to God? and tender Affection to all his Creatures? Is their Religion, the Religion of the Heart? A Renewal of Soul in the Image of God? Do they resemble him they worship? Are they free from Pride, from Vanity, from Malice and Envy; from Ambition and Avarice, from Passion and Lust; from every uneasy and unlovely Temper? Alas, I fear neither they (the greater Part at least) nor you, know what this Religion means; or have any more Notion of it, than the Peasant that holds the Plough, of the Religion of a *Gymnosophist*.

'Tis well if the *Genuine Religion* of Christ has any more Alliance with what you call Religion, than with the *Turkish* Pilgrimages to Mecca, or the *Papish* Worship of our Lady of Loretto. Have not you substituted in the Place of the Religion of the Heart, something (I do not say equally sinful, but) equally vain, and foreign to the worshipping of God in Spirit and in Truth? What else can be said even of Prayer, (Publick or Private) in the Manner wherein you generally perform it? As a thing of course, running round and round, in the same dull Track, without either the Knowledge or Love of God? Without one Heavenly Temper, either attained or improved? O what Mockery of God is this!

And

And yet even *this Religion*, which can do you no Good, may do you much Harm. Nay, 'tis plain, it does : It daily, increases your *Pride*, as you measure your Goodness by the *Number* and *Length* of your Performances. It gives you a deep *Contempt* of those, who do not come up to the full *Tale* of your Virtues. It inspires Men with a *Zeal*, which is the very Fire of Hell, furious, bitter, implacable, unmerciful ; often to a Degree that extinguishes all Compassion, all good Nature and Humanity. Infomuch that the execrable *Fierceness* of Spirit, which is the natural Fruit of such a Religion, hath many times, in spite of all Ties, divine and human, broke out into open Violence, into Rapine, Murder, Sedition, Rebellion, Civil War, to the Desolation of whole Cities and Countries.

Tantum hæc Religio potuit suadere malorum !

3. Now if there be a God, and one that is not a mere idle Spectator of the Things that are done upon Earth, but a Rewarder of Men and Nations according to their Works, what can the Event of these things be? It was reasonable to believe, that he would have risen long ago, and maintained his own Cause, either by sending the Famine or Pestilence among us, or by pouring out his Fury in Blood. And many wise and holy Men have frequently declared, That they daily expected this ; that they daily looked for the Patience of God to give place, and Judgment to rejoice over Mercy.

4. Just at this Time, when we wanted little of *filling up the Measure of our Iniquities*, two or three Clergymen of the Church of England began vehemently to call Sinners to Repentance. In two or three Years they had sounded the same Alarm, to the utmost Borders of the Land. Many Thousands gathered together to hear them ; and in every Place where they came, many began to shew such a Concern for Religion, as they never had done before. A stronger Impression was made on their Minds, of the Importance of things eternal, and they had more earnest Desires of

of serving God, than they had ever had from their earliest Childhood. Thus did God begin to draw them toward himself, with the Cords of Love, with the Bands of a Man.

Many of these were in a short Time deeply *convinced* of the *Number* and *Heinousness* of their *Sins*. They were also made throughly sensible of those *Temper*s, which are justly hateful to God and Man, and of their utter *Ignorance* of God, and entire *Inability*, either to know, love or serve him. At the same time, they saw in the strongest Light, the *Insignificancy* of their *outside Religion*: Nay, and often confess'd it before God, as the most abominable *Hypocrisy*. Thus did they sink deeper and deeper into that *Repentance*, which must ever preceide *Faith* in the Son of God.

And from hence sprung *Fruits meet for Repentance*. The Drunkard commenced sober and temperate. The Whoremonger abstained from Adultery and Fornication; the Unjust from Oppression and Wrong. He that had been accustomed to curse and swear, for many Years, now swore no more. The Sluggard began to work with his Hands, that he might eat his own Bread. The Miser learned to deal his Bread to the Hungry, and to cover the Naked with a Garment. Indeed the whole Form of their Life w s changed. They had *left off doing Evil and learn'd to do well*.

5. But this was not all. Over and above this *outward Change*, they began to experience *inward Religion*. *The Love of GOD* was *shed abroad in their Hearts*, which they continue to enjoy to this Day. They love him, *because he first loved us*, and withheld not from us his Son, his only Son. And this Love constrains them to love all Mankind, all the Children of the Father of Heaven and Earth, and inspires them with every holy and heavenly Temper, the whole Mind that was in Christ. Hence it is that they are now uniform in their Behaviour, unblameable in all manner of Conversation. And in whatsoever State they are, they have learned therewith to be content: Inasmuch that now they can *in every thing give Thanks*: They more than patiently acquiesce, they rejoice and are exceeding glad,

glad, in all GOD's Dispensations toward them. For as long as they love GOD (and that Love no Man taketh from them) they are always happy in GOD. Thus they calmly travel on thro' Life, being never weary nor faint in their Minds, never repining, murmuring or dissatisfied, casting all their Care upon GOD, till the Hour comes that they should drop this Covering of Earth, and return unto the great Father of Spirits. Then especially it is, that they rejoice with Joy *unspeakable and full of Glory*. You who credit it not, come and see. See these living and dying Christians.

“ Happy while on Earth they breathe ;
 Mightier Joys ordain'd to know,
 Trampling on Sin, Hell and Death,
 To the third Heaven they go.”

Now if these Things are so, what reasonable Man can deny (supposing the Scriptures to be true) that God is now visiting this Nation, in a far other Manner than we had Cause to expect? Instead of pouring out his fierce Displeasure upon us, he hath made us yet another Tender of Mercy : So that even when *Sin did most abound, Grace hath much more abounded.*

6. Yea, *the Grace of GOD which bringeth Salvation*, present Salvation from inward and outward Sin, hath abounded of late Years in such a *Degree*, as neither we nor our Fathers had known. How *extensive* is the Change which has been wrought on the Minds and Lives of the People! Know ye not that the Sound is gone forth into all the Land? That there is scarce a City or considerable Town to be found, where some have not been rouzed out of the Sleep of Death, and constrained to cry out, in the Bitterness of their Soul, *What must I do to be saved?* That this *religious Concern* has spread to every Age and Sex; to most Orders and Degrees of Men? To abundance of those in particular, who in time past, were accounted Monsters of Wickedness, *drinking in Iniquity like Water*, and committing all *Uncleanness with Greediness*.

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7. In

7. In what Age has such a Work been wrought, considering the *Swiftness* as well as the *Extent* of it? When have such *Numbers* of Sinners in so *short* a Time been recover'd from the Error of their Ways? When hath Religion, I will not say, since the *Reformation*, but since the Time of *Constantine the Great*, made so large a Progress in any Nation, within so small a Space? I believe, hardly can either antient or modern History, supply us with a parallel Instance.

8. Let understanding Men observe also the *Depth* of the Work, so *extensively* and *swiftly* wrought. It is not a slight or superficial Thing: But Multitudes of Men have been so thoroughly *convinced of Sin*, that their *Bones were smitten asunder, as it were with a Sword, dividing the very Joints and Marrow*. Many of these have been shortly after so filled with *Peace and Joy in believing*, that whether they were in the Body, or out of the Body, they could scarcely tell. And in the Power of this Faith they have trampled under foot, whatever the World accounts either terrible or desirable: Having evidenced in the severest Trials, so fervent a Love to GOD, so invariable and tender a Goodwill to Mankind, particularly to their Enemies, and such a Measure of all the Fruits of Holiness, as were not unworthy the Apostolic Age. Now so deep a Repentance, so firm a Faith, so fervent Love and unblemish'd Holiness, wrought in so many Persons, within so short a Time, the World has not seen for many Ages.

9. No less remarkable is the *Purity* of the Religion which has extended itself so *deeply* and *swiftly*. I speak particularly, with regard to the Doctrines held by those, among whom it is so extended. Those of the Church of *England*, at least, must acknowledge this. For where is there a Body of People in the Realm, who, Number for Number, so closely adhere to what our Church delivers as pure Doctrine? Where are those who have approved and do approve themselves more *orthodox*, more sound in their Opinions? Is there a *Socinian* or *Arian* among them all? Nay, were you to recite the whole Catalogue of *Heresies*, enumerated by Bp. *Pearson*,

son, it might be ask'd, Who can lay any one of these to their Charge?

Nor is their Religion more *pure* from *Heresy*, than it is from *Superstition*. In former Times, wherever an unusual Concern for the Things of GOD hath appear'd, on the one hand *strange and erroneous Opinions* continually sprung up with it; on the other, a *Zeal* for Things which were no Part of Religion, as tho' they had been essential Branches of it. And many have laid as great (if not greater) Stress on Trifles, as on the weightier Matters of the Law. But it has not been so in the present Case. No Stress has been laid on any thing, as tho' it were necessary to Salvation, but what is undeniably contain'd in the Word of GOD. And of the Things contain'd therein, the Stress laid on each, has been in proportion to the Nearness of its Relation, to what is there laid down as the Sum of all, the Love of GOD and our Neighbour. So *pure* from *Superstition*, so thoroughly *scriptural* is that Religion, which has lately spread in this Nation.

10. It is likewise *rational* as well as *scriptural*; it is as *pure* from *Enthusiasm*, as from *Superstition*. It is true, the contrary has been continually *affirmed*. But to *affirm* is one thing, to *prove* is another. Who will *prove*, That it is *Enthusiasm* to love GOD? Even tho' we love him with all our Heart? To *rejoice* in the Sense of his Love to us? To *praise* him, even with all our Strength? Who is able, to *make good* this Charge, against the *Love* of all Mankind? Or, laying Rhetorical Flourishes aside, to come close to the Question and *demonstrate*, That it is *Enthusiasm*, in every State we are in, therewith to be *content*? I do but just touch on the *general Heads*. Ye Men of Reason, give me, a Man, who, setting Raillery and ill Names apart, will maintain this by dint of *Argument*. If not, own *this Religion* is the Thing you seek; sober, manly, rational, divine: However exposed to the Censure of those, who are accusom'd to revile what they understand not.

11. It may be farther observ'd, the Religion of those we now speak of, is entirely clear from *Bigotry*. (Perhaps this might have been rank'd with *Superstition*, of

which it seems to be only a particular Species.) They are in no wise *bigotted* to *Opinions*. They do indeed hold right *Opinions*. But they are peculiarly cautious, not to rest the Weight of Christianity there. They have no such overgrown Fondness for any *Opinions*, as to think those alone will make them Christians, or to confine their Affection or Esteem to those who agree with them therein. There is nothing they are more fearful of than this, lest it should steal upon them unawares. Nor are they *bigotted* to any particular Branch, even of Practical Religion. They desire indeed to be exact in every Jot and Tittle, in the very smallest Points of *Christian Practice*. But they are not attached to one Point more than another; they aim at uniform, universal Obedience. They contend for nothing *trifling*, as if it was important; for nothing *indifferent*, as if it were necessary; for nothing *circumstantial*, as if it were essential to Christianity; but for every thing in its own Order.

12. Above all, let it be observed, that this Religion has no Mixture of *Vice* or *Unholiness*. It gives no Man of any Rank or Profession, the least Licence to sin. It makes no Allowance to any Person, for Ungodliness of any Kind. Not that all who follow after have attained this, either are already perfect: But however that be, they *plead* for no Sin, either Inward or Outward. They condemn every Kind and Degree thereof, in themselves as well as in other Men. Indeed, most in themselves; it being their constant Care, to bring those Words home to their own Case, *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all.*

13. Yet there is not found among them that *bitter Zeal*, in Points either of small or of great Importance, that Spirit of *Persecution*, which has so often accompanied the Spirit of Reformation. 'Tis an idle Conceit, that the Spirit of Persecution is among the *Papists* only; it is wheresoever the Devil, that old Murderer, works; and he still *worketh* in all the Children of *Disobedience*. Of consequence, all the Children of *Disobedience*, will on a thousand different Pretences,
and

and in a thousand different Ways, so far as God permits, persecute the Children of God. But what is still more to be lamented is, that the Children of God themselves, have so often used the same Weapons and persecuted others, when the Power was in their own Hands.

Can we wholly excuse those venerable Men, our great Reformers themselves, from this Charge? I fear not, if we impartially read over any History of the Reformation. What Wonder is it then, that when the Tables were turned, Bp. Bonner or Gardiner should make Reprisals? That they should measure to others (indeed good Measure shaken together) what had before been measured to them? Nor is it strange, when we consider the single Case of Joan Bocher, that God should suffer those (otherwise) holy Men, Archbishop Cranmer, Bp. Ridley, and Bp. Latimer, to drink of the same Cup with her.

14. But can you find any Tincture of this in the Case before us? Do not all who have lately known the Love of God, know *what Spirit they are of*? And that *the Son of Man is not come to destroy Men's Lives, but to save them*? Do they approve of the using any Kind or Degree of Violence, on any Account or Pretence whatsoever, in Matters of Religion? Do they not hold the Right every Man has to judge for himself, to be sacred and inviolable? Do they allow any Method of bringing even those who are farthest out of the Way, who are in the grossest Errors, to the Knowledge of the Truth, except the Methods of Reason and Persuasion? Of Love, Patience, Gentleness, Long-suffering? Is there any thing in their Practice which is inconsistent with this their constant Profession? Do they in fact hinder their own Relations or Dependents from worshipping God according to their own Conscience? When they believe them to be in Error, do they use Force of any Kind, in order to bring them out of it? Let the Instances, if there are such, be produced. But if no such are to be found, then let all reasonable Men who believe the Bible, own, That a Work of God is wrought in

our Land: And such a Work (if we survey, in one View the *Extent* of it, the *Swiftness* with which it has spread, the *Depth* of that Religion which was so swiftly diffused, and its *Purity* from all corrupt Mixtures,) as it must be acknowledged, cannot easily be parallel'd, in all these concurrent Circumstances, by any thing that is found in the *English* Annals since Christianity was first planted in this Island.

II. 1. And yet those who can discern the Face of the Sky, cannot discern the Signs of the Times. Yet those who are esteemed wise Men do not know, that God is now reviving his Work upon Earth. Indeed concerning some of these the Reason is plain; they know not, because they think not of it. Their Thoughts are otherwise employ'd; their Minds are taken up with things of quite a different Nature. Or perhaps, they may think of it a little now and then, when they have nothing else to do; but not seriously, or deeply; not with any Closeness or Attention of Thought. They are too much in Haste to weigh the Facts whereof we speak, and to draw the just Inferences therefrom: Nor is the Conviction which they may sometimes feel suffered to sink into their Hearts; but things that have a larger Share in their Affections soon destroy the very Traces of it.

2. True it is, that there are some who think more deeply, who are accustomed to consider things from the Foundation, and to lay Circumstances together, that they may judge of nothing before they have full Evidence: And yet even some of these appear to be in doubt, concerning the present Work. Now, supposing it to be a Work of God, how can this be accounted for? That they who so diligently inquire concerning it, do not know the Time of their Visitation? Perhaps because of the deeply rooted *Prejudice* which they brought with them to the Enquiry; and which still hanging on their Minds, makes it scarce possible for them to form an impartial Judgment. Perhaps even a slight *Prepossession* might occasion their stumbling on some of those Rocks of Offence, which
by

by the wise Permission of God, always did and always will attend any Revival of his Work. Nay, it may be, their very Caution was carried to Excess. They would not judge, before they had such Evidence as the Nature of the thing would not admit, or at least God did not see fit to give.

3. All this is very easy to conceive. But it may at first appear surprizing, to find Men of Renown, Men supposed to be endow'd with Knowledge, and with Abilities of every Kind, flatly, openly, peremptorily *denying*, that there has been any *unusual* Work of God at all! Yea, a late eminent Writer goes farther yet, accounts it an Instance of downright *Enthusiasm*, to *imagine*, that there is any *extraordinary* Work now wrought upon the Earth.

It avails not to say, "No, he does not *deny* this, "but he denies it to be the Work of God". This is palpably trifling: For the Work under Consideration is of such a Nature (namely, the Conversion of Men from all Manner of Sin, to Holiness of Heart and Life) that if it be at any Time wrought at all, it must be the Work of God: Seeing it is God alone, and not any Child of Man, who is able to *destroy the Works of the Devil*.

Yet neither is this difficult to be accounted for, if we consider things more closely: For the same *Prejudice* which keeps some *in doubt*, may easily be conceived so to influence others, as to make them wholly *deny* the Work of God. And this it may do in several Ways: It may either bring them to question the Facts related, and hinder their endeavouring to be more fully informed; or prevent their drawing such Inferences from those Facts, as they would otherwise see to be plain and undeniable. Yea, and it will give ten-fold Weight to the *Offences* which must come, so as to over-balance all Evidence whatsoever.

4. This also may account for the Behaviour of those, who not content to suspend their Judgment, or to *deny* the Work of God, go farther still, even to the

Length of *contradicting* and *blaspheming*. Nay, some of these have expressed a deeper Abhorrence, and shewn a stronger Enmity against this, than they were ever known to do against Popery, Infidelity, or any Heresy whatsoever. Some have persecuted the *Instruments* whom it pleased God to use herein, only not to the Death: And others have treated in the same Manner, all those whom they termed their *Follwers*. A few Instances of this it may be proper to mention, out of very many which might be recited.

5. On the 20th of June 1743, a great Multitude of People gathered together, chiefly from *Walsal*, *Darleston* and *Bilston*, in *Wednesbury Church-yard*, *Staffordshire*. They went from thence (after by sounding a Horn they had gathered their whole Company together) to Mr. Eaton's House, in the Middle of the Town, who was at that Time *Constable*. He went to the Door with his Constable's Staff, and began reading the Act of Parliament against Riots; but the Stones flew so thick about his Head, that he was forced to leave off reading and retire. They broke all his Windows, the Door of his House, and a large Clock in Pieces. They went then to above four-score other Houses, in many of which there were not three Panes of Glass left.

6. About *Whitsuntide*, 1743. a Mob arose at *Darleston*, (near *Wensbury*) and broke all the Windows, (beside spoiling many of their Goods) of *Joshua Constable*, *John Cotterell*, *Thomas Butler*, *Thomas Wilkinson*, *Aaron Longmore*, *William Powell*, *Ann Evans*, *Walter Carter*, *Samuel Carter*, and *Thomas Wilks*.

Edward Martin, *Ann Low*, *Joan Fletcher*, *Edward Horton*, *Mumford Wilks*, *Jos. Yardly* and *Robert Deacon* had all their Windows broke twice.

James Foster, *Widow Hires*, and *Jonathan Jones* had their Windows broke, and Money exorted to save their House.

John Foster and *Joice Wood* had their Windows broke, and their Goods broken and spoil'd.

Jos. Spittle had his Windows broke, his House broke open, some Goods spoil'd, and some taken away.

William

William Woods had his Windows broke twice, and was himself compelled to go along with the Rabble.

Elizabeth Lingham, a Widow with five Children, had her Goods spoiled, her Spinning-Wheel (the Support of her Family) broke : And her *Parish Allowance* reduced from 2 s. and 6 d. to 1 s. and 6 d. a Week.

Valentine Ambersley had his Windows broke twice ; his Wife, big with Child. beaten with Clubs.

George Wynn had his Windows and Goods broke, and to save his House, was forced to give them drink.

Thomas Day had his Windows and Goods broke, and was forced to remove from the Town.

Joseph Stubbs had his Windows broke twice, and his Wife so frightened that she miscarried.

7 On June 20. 1743. *John Baker*, at the Head of a large Mob, came to the House of *Jonas Turner*, at *West-Bramswick*, near *Wensbury*, and asked him, "Whether he wou'd keep from these Men that went preaching about, and go to the Church?" He answered, *I do go to the Church.* But I never see any of you there. Presently one *Daniel Oniens* with a great Club, broke great Part of the Window at one Blow. Others laid hold of him and dragg'd him about Sixty Yards, before he cou'd get loose from them. Afterwards they broke all his Windows, and threw into the House abundance of Stones, to break his Goods.

About 4 in the Afternoon, they came to the House of Widow *Turner*, of *West Bramswick*. They threw in Stones and Bricks so fast, that she was forced to open the Door and run out among them. One of her Daughters cried out, "My Mother will be killed!" On which they fell to throwing Stones at her. She ran into a Neighbour's House ; but before she cou'd shut the Door, they broke the Bottom off with a Brick End. They followed her other Daughter with Stones, and one with a great Stake. She ran into another House, much frightened, expecting to be murder'd. The Widow asked, "How can you come and abuse us thus?" On which one came with a large Club, and swore, "If she spoke another Word, he wou'd knock her on the Head, and bury her in the Ditch." Then he went and broke all

all the Glass that was left. The same they did to many of the neighbouring Houses.

8. On the 19th of *June*, *James Yeoman* of *Walsal*, saw *Mary Bird* in her Father's House at *Wensbury*, and swore, "By G— you are there now: But we will kill you To-morrow." Accordingly he came with a Mob the next Day; and after they had broke all the Windows, he took up a Stone and said, "Now, by G— I will kill you." He threw it, and struck her on the Side of the Head. The Blood gushed out and she dropt down immediately.

The same Day, they came to *John Turner's* House, And after they had broke all the Windows, Casements and Cieling, one of them cried out, "I suppose now "you will go to your dear Jesus's Wounds, and see "them opened for you."

Another of them took *Mr. Hands* of *Wensbury* by the Throat, swore he wou'd be the Death of him, gave him a great Swing round, and threw him upon the Ground. As soon as he arose, one *Equal Baker*, gave him a Blow on the Eye and knock'd him down again. In about half an Hour, the Mob came to his House, and broke all the Windows, except about twenty Panes. The Kitchen Windows they clear'd, Lead, Bars and all, broke the Window-Posts and threw them into the House. The Shop was shut up (he being an Apothecary:) But they quickly broke it open, broke all the Pots and Bottles in Pieces, and destroy'd all his Medicines. They broke also the Shelves and Drawers in the Shop to Pieces, and many of his Household Goods.

In the latter End of *June*, *John Griffiths* of *Wensbury*, and *Francis Ward* went to Mr. D. Justice of the Peace. They told him the Condition they and their Neighbours were in, their Houses broken, and their Goods spoiled. He replied, "I suppose you follow these Parsons that come about. I will neither meddle nor make."

9. On *January* 13, 1743-4, the Mob rose again at *Darleston*, broke all the Windows of all who followed this Way (except two or three who bought themselves off) broke open several Houses, and took what

what they liked, the People belonging to them being fled for their Lives.

About the same time, the Reverend Mr. E— came to *Darleston*; and meeting some others at *Thomas Forshew's*, they drew up a Writing, and *Nicholas Winspur*, the Crier of the Town gave Publick Notice, “ That all the People of the Society must come to Mr. *Forshew's*, and sign it; or else their Houses would be pulled down immediately.” It was to this Effect, “ That they would never read, or sing, or pray together, or hear these Parsons any more.”

Several sign'd this thro' Fear. They made every one who did, lay down a Penny—— “ To make the Mob drink.”

10. About *Candlemas*, the Wife of *Joshua Constable* of *Darleston* was going to *Wensbury*, when a Mob met her in the Road, threw her down several Times, and abused her in a manner too horrible to write. A Warrant was procured for some of these. But one of them only was carried before Mr. G——, who came back and told his Companions, that the Justice said, “ That they might go home about their Business.” On this the Mob rose again, came to *Joshua's* House, and destroy'd all the necessary Goods therein. They likewise broke and spoiled all his Shop Tools, threw the Tiles off of the Roof of the House, and pulled down one Room, the Joist of which they carried away with them. All his Gunlocks they took away; they tore in Pieces all his Wife's Linnen, cut the Bed and Bedstead, so that it was good for nothing, and tore her Bible and Common Prayer Book all to Pieces. She and her Husband retired to another House. But one telling the Mob they were there, they swore “ they would tear it down immediately, if the Man let them stay any longer.” So they went out in the Frost and Snow, not knowing where to lay their Head.

11. On *Tuesday, Jan. 31, 1743* 4 *Henry Old* came to *John Griffith's* House, saying, “ If he did not leave following this Way, he had a hundred Men at his Command, who should come and pull his House down.” Soon after he brought some with him; but the Neighbour's

bours gave him Money, and sent him away for that Time.

Mond. Feb. 6. between seven and eight at Night, came Part of the same Company. Hearing them afar off, *John* and Wife fastened the Door, and left the House. Some of the Neighbours going in soon after, found them destroying all they could. Two Chairs and several Bundles of Linnen, were laid upon the Fire. After they had destroy'd what they cou'd, they loaded themselves with Cloaths and Meat, and went their Way.

The same Day public Notice was given at *Waljal*, by a Paper fixt up there, "That all who design'd to assist in breaking the Windows, and plundering the Houses of the *Methodists* at *Wensbury*, should be ready at ten o'Clock, the next Morning, on the *Church-Hill*."

12. The next Morning, *Feb. 7*, (being *Shrove Tuesday*) about half an Hour after ten, great Numbers of Men were gathered together on the *Church Hill*. Thence they marched down, some arm'd with Swords, some with Clubs, and some with Axes. They first fell upon *Benjamin Watson's* House, and broke many of the Tiles and all the Windows. Next they came to *Mr. Adinbrook's*, broke a fine Clock, with many of his Goods, and stole all the Things they could carry away. The next House was *Jane Smith's*, whose Windows they broke, with what little Goods she had. The next was *Mr. Bird's*, where they destroyed every Thing they found, except what they carried away; cutting the Beds in pieces, as they did all the Beds which they could any where find. Thence they went to *Mr. Edge's* House: He was ill of a Fever; so, for a Sum of Money, they past it over. The next House was *Mr. Hand's*. They broke all his Counter, Boxes and Drawers, and all (except some Bedsteads) that Axe or Hammer could break. They spilt all his Drugs and Chymical Medicines, and stole every thing they could carry, even all his and his Wife's wearing Apparel, beside what they had on.

13. Mr.

13. Mr. *Eaton's* House was next. They broke all his Windows, and all his inside Doors in Pieces, cut the Lead off his House, destroyed or stole whatever they could lay their Hands on. Some Gentlemen offered to stop them, if he would sign a Paper implying, "That he would never hear these Parsons more." But he told them, "He had felt already what a wounded Conscience was; and by the Grace of GOD he would wound his Conscience no more."

After they had done at Mr. *Eaton's*, they plunder'd several other Houses in *Wensbury* and *West-Bramwick*. It is scarce possible to describe the Outrages they committed. Only they left them they plunder'd alive.

While they were plundering *John Turner's* House, he waded thro' the Brook, to try if he could save some of his Goods, which one *David Garington* was carrying away. Upon which *Garington* told him, "It would be the same here as it was in *Ireland*, for there would be a *Massacre* very quickly. And he wish'd it was now."

14. About eleven o' Clock, *Sarah*, the Wife of *John Sheldon*, being told, the Mob was coming to her House, went and met them at the Gate. She ask'd *John Baker*, their Captain, "What they were come for?" He answer'd, "If she would have nothing more to do with these People, not a Penny worth of her Goods should be hurt." She made no Reply. Then they broke the Door open, and began breaking and plundering the Goods. One coming out with a Fire-shovel, she begg'd him, "not to take it away." He swore, "if she spoke another Word, he would beat her Brains out."

John Sheldon was this while helping *Thomas Parkes* to hide his Goods, tho' he knew by the Noise they were breaking his own to Pieces. Between Two and Three he came to his House with *William Sitch*. *William* asked *Sarah*, how she did? Saying, "For his Part, he took joyfully the spoiling of his Goods." She answered, that "seeing so much Wickedness, she could not rejoice; but she blessed GOD she could bear it patiently, and found not the least Anger in her." *John Sheldon* seeing the Spoil they had made, smiled

and said, " Here is strange Work." His Wife told him, " if she had complied with their Terms, not one Penny-worth would have been hurt." He replied, " That if she had complied to deny the Truth, and he had found his Goods whole on that Account, he should never have been easy as long as he lived; but he blessed GOD that she had rather chosen to suffer Wrong."

The Mob continued to rise for six Days together. The Damage they did in and about *Wednesbury*, at the very lowest Computation, amounted to five hundred and four Pounds, seventeen Shillings.

Wednesday, October 19, 1743, I came to *Birmingham*, in my Way to *Newcastle*. *Thursday, October 20*, several Persons from *Wednesbury* earnestly desired me to call there. I yielded to their Importunity, and went. I was sitting and writing at *Francis Ward's*, in the Afternoon; when the Cry arose, " That the *Darleston* Mob had beset the House." I call'd together those that were in the House, and prayed, that GOD would scatter the People that delight in War. And it was so: One went one Way, and one another; so that in half an Hour the House was clear on every Side. But, before Five, they returned with greater Numbers. The Cry of all was, " Bring out the Minister."

I desired one to bring the Captain of the Mob into the House. After a few Words interchanged, the Lion was as a Lamb. I then desired him to bring in one or two more of the most angry of his Companions. He did so; and, in two Minutes, their Mind was changed too. I then bad them who were in the Room make Way, that I might go out among the People. As soon as I was in the Midst of them, I said, " Here I am: " What do you want with me? " Many cried out, " We want you to go with us to the Justice." I told them, " That I will with all my Heart." So I walked before, and two or three hundred of them followed, to *Bentley-Hall*, two Miles from *Wensbury*. But a Servant came out, and told them, " Justice Lane was not to be spoken with." Here they were at a Stand, till one advised to go to Justice *Persehouse*, at *Walsal*.
About

About Seven we came to his House: But he also sent Word, "That he was in Bed, and could not be spoken with."

All the Company were now pretty well agreed, to make the best of their Way home: But we had not gone 100 Yards, when the Mob of *Walsal* came pouring in like a Flood. The *Darleston* Mob stood against them for a While; but, in a short Time, some being knocked down, and others much hurt, the rest ran away, and left me in their Hand.

To attempt to speak was vain, the Noise being like that of taking a City by Storm: So they dragged me along till they came to the Town, at a few hundred Yards Distance; where, seeing the Door of large House open, I endeavoured to go in: But a Man, catching me by the Hair, (my Hat having been caught away at the Beginning) pull'd me back into the Middle of the Mob; who were as so many ramping and roaring Lions. They hurried me from thence, through the main Street, from one End of the Town to the other. I continued speaking all the Time to those within hearing, feeling no Pain or Weariness.

At the West End of the Town, seeing a Door half open, I made towards it, and would have gone in; but a Gentleman in the Shop would not suffer me, saying, "They would pull the House down, if I did." However, here I stood, and asked, "Are you willing to hear me speak?" Many cried out, "No, no: Knock his Brains out." Others said, "Nay; but we *will* hear him speak first." I began asking, "What Hurt have I done you? Whom among you have I wronged in Word or Deed?" And continued speaking till my Voice fail'd. Then the Floods lifted up their Voice again; many crying out, "Bring him away, bring him away."

Feeling my Strength renewed, I spoke again, and broke out aloud into Prayer. And now, one of the Men who had headed the Mob before, turned, and said, "Sir, follow me: "Not a Man shall touch a Hair of your Head." Two or three more confirmed his Words. At the same Time the Mayor (for it was he that stood in the Shop) cried out, "For Shame, for Shame; let
I 2 him

him go." An honest Butcher spoke to the same Effect; and seconded his Words by laying hold of four or five, one after another, who were running on the most fiercely. The People then dividing to the Right and Left, those three or four Men who had spoken before, took me between them, and carried me through the Midst; bitterly protesting, "They would knock down any that touched him." But on the Bridge the Mob rallied again: We therefore went on one Side, over a Mill dam, and thence thro' the Meadows, till a little after Ten, GOD brought me safe to *Wensbury*, having lost only a Part of my Waistcoat, and a little Skin from one of my Hands.

I believe every Reasonable Man will allow, That nothing can possibly excuse these Proceedings: Seeing they are open, bare-faced Violations both of Justice and Mercy, and of all Laws Divine and Human.

III. 1. I suppose no Protestant will undertake to defend such Proceedings, even toward the vilest Miscreants. But abundance of *Excuses* have been made, if not for *opposing* it thus, yet for *denying* this Work to be of GOD, and for not acknowledging the Time of our Visitation.

Some alledge, That the *Doctrines* of these Men are *False*, *Erroneous* and *Enthusiastick*: That they are *new*, and unheard-of till of late: That they are Quakerism, Fanaticism, Popery.

This whole Pretence has been already cut up by the Roots; it having been shewn at large, that every Branch of this Doctrine, is the plain Doctrine of Scripture, interpreted by our own Church. Therefore it cannot be either *False* or *Erroneous*, provided the Scripture be True. Neither can it be *Enthusiastick*, unless the same Epithet belongs to our Articles, Homilies and Liturgy. Nor yet can these Doctrines be term'd *New*: No newer, at least, than the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*; not even with Regard to the *Way of Expression*, the Manner wherein they are proposed. And as to the Substance, they are more antient still; as antient not only as the Gospel, as the Times of *Isaiab*, or *David*,
or

or *Moses*, but as the first Revelation of God to Man. If therefore they were *unheard of* till of late, in any that is term'd a Christian Country, the greater Guilt is on those, who as Ambassadors of Christ, ought to publish them Day by Day.

Fanaticism, if it means any Thing at all, means the same with *Enthusiasm*, or Religious Madness, from which (as was observed before) *these Doctrines* are distant as far as the East from the West. However, it is a *convenient* Word to be thrown out, upon any Thing we do not like; because scarce one Reader in a Thousand, has any Idea of what it means. If any Part of this Doctrine is held by the *Quakers*, there is the more Reason to rejoice. I wou'd to God they held it all: Tho' the Doctrine itself, wou'd be neither better nor worse for this.

Popery in the Mouth of many Men means just nothing; or at most, "Something very horrid and bad." But *Popery*, properly speaking, is, *The Distinguishing Doctrines* of the Church of Rome. They are summ'd up in the *Twelve Articles* which the Council of Trent, added to the *Nicene Creed*. Now who can find the least Connexion between any of these, and the Doctrines whereof we are speaking?

2. Others alledge, "Their Doctrine is too strict. They make the Way to Heaven too narrow." And this is in Truth the Original Objection, (as it was almost the only one for some Time) and is secretly at the Bottom of a Thousand more, which appear in various Forms. But do they make the Way to Heaven any narrower, than our Lord and his Apostles made it? Is their Doctrine stricter than that of the Bible? Consider only a few plain Texts. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Mind, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength—For every idle Word which Men shall speak, they shall give an Account in the Day of Judgment—When ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.* If their Doctrine is stricter than this, they are to blame. But you know in your Conscience, it is not. And who can be one jot less strict, without

corrupting the Word of GOD? Can any Steward of the Mysteries of GOD be found faithful, if he change any Part of that sacred Depositum? No. He can abate nothing, he can soften nothing. He is constrained to declare to all Men, "I may not *bring down* the Scripture to your Taste. You must *come up* to it, or perish for ever."

3. This is the real Ground of that other popular Cry, concerning "the Uncharitableness of these Men." Uncharitable are they? In what respect? Do they not feed the Hungry and clothe the Naked? "No, That is not the Thing. They are not wanting in this. But they are so *Uncharitable* in judging! They think none can be saved, but those of their own Way. They damn all the World beside themselves."

What do you mean? "They think none can be saved, but those of their own Way." Most surely they do. For as there is but *One Heaven*, so there is but *One Way* to it: Even the Way of *Faith* in Christ, (for we speak not of *Opinions*, or outward *Modes of Worship*) the Way of *Love* to GOD and Man, the *High-way of Holiness*. And is it uncharitable, to think or say, That none can be saved, but those who walk in this Way? Was he then uncharitable, who declared, *He that believeth not shall be damned*? Or he that said, *Follow Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord*? And again: *Tho' I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and tho' I give my Body to be burned, yet if I have not wisdom, Charity, Love, all this profite h me nothing.*"

"But they damn all, you say, beside themselves." Damn all! What kind of Word is this? They damn no Man. None is able to damn any Man, but the Lord and Judge of all. What you probably mean by that strange Expression, is, They declare that God condemns all, beside those who believe in Jesus Christ, and love him and keep his Commandments. And so must you also, or you sin against God, and your Neighbour and your own Soul. But is there any *Uncharitableness* in this? In warning Sinners to flee from the Wrath to come? On the contrary, not to warn a poor

poor, blind, stupid Wretch, that he is hanging over the Mouth of Hell, would be so inexcusable a Want of Charity, as would bring his Blood upon our own Head.

4. But there is no room for Dispute, touching these *Doctrines* in general, seeing our Lord gives you so plain a Rule, by which you may easily and infallibly know, whether they be of God. *The Tree is known by its Fruit : Either therefore make the Tree good, and its Fruit good; or else, make the Tree corrupt and its Fruit corrupt,* (Matt. xii. 33.) Now what Fruit does the Tree before us bring forth? Look and see; believe your own Eyes and Ears. Sinners leave their Sins. The Servants of the Devil become the Servants of God. Is this good or evil Fruit? That *Vice* loses ground, and *Virtue*, practical *Religion*, gains? O dispute no more. Know the Tree by its Fruit. Bow and own the Finger of God.

But many who own *these Doctrines* to be of God, yet cannot be reconciled to the *Instruments* he hath made use of. A very common Exception taken against these is (and was from the Beginning) "That they are so young." Therefore (abundance of Men have readily inferr'd) "This Work cannot be of God."

Perhaps they are not so young as you conceive. Mr. *Whitefield* is now upwards of Thirty; my Brother is Thirty-seven Years of Age. I have lived above Forty-two Years. And a Gentleman in *Cornwall*, for whom I often preach, has the Merit of having lived Threescore and seventeen Years.

But supposing the Antecedent true, what a Consequence is this? What Shadow of Scripture have you to support it? Doth not God send by whom he will send? And who shall say to him, *What dost thou?* "These are too young; send elder Men." What Shadow of Reason? Is it not possible, that a Person of Thirty or Forty may have as true a Judgment in the Things of God, and as great a Blessing attending his Preaching, as one of Fifty or Four-score?

I with you would explain yourself a little on this Head :

Scire velim, verbo pretium quotus arroget annus ?

How old do you require a Man to be, before God shall have Leave to speak by his Mouth ? —

O my Brethren, who could have believed any serious Man wou'd once have named such an Argument as this ? Seeing both Scripture and Reason teach, that God herein *giveth Account to none of his Ways*. But he worketh by whomsoever he *will* work ; he sheweth Mercy by whom he *will* shew Mercy.

6. “ But there are only a *Few* young Heads.” I cannot but observe here, what great Pains have been taken, what Diligence shewn, to make and to keep them *Few*. What Arts have not been used, to keep back those, of the Clergy in particular, who have been clearly convinced from time to time, that they ought to join Hearts and Hands in the Work ? On this Occasion, it has been accounted meritorious to *say all manner of Evil of us falsely* : To *promise* them whatever their Hearts desired, if they wou'd refrain from these Men : And, on the other hand, to *threaten* them with heavy things, if ever they went among them more. So that how fully soever they were convinced, they could not act according to their Conviction, unless they could give up at once all Thought of *Preferment*, either in Church or State ; nay, all Hope of even a *Fellowship*, or poor *Scholarship*, in either University. Many also have been threaten'd, that if they went on in this Way, what little they had should be taken from them. And many have, on this very Account, been disown'd by their dearest Friends and nearest Relations. So that there was no Possibility the Number of these Labourers should ever be increas'd at all, unless by those who could break thro' all these Ties, who desired nothing in the present World, who counted neither their Fortunes, nor Friends, nor Lives dear unto themselves, so they might only *keep a Conscience void of Offence* toward God and toward Men.

7. But what do you infer from their *Fewness* ? That because they are *Few*, therefore God cannot *work*
by

by them? Upon what Scripture do you ground this? I thought it was *the same to Him, to save by many or by few*. Upon what Reason? Why cannot God save Ten thousand Souls by One Man, as well as by Ten thousand? How little, how inconsiderable a Circumstance is Number before God? Nay, is there not Reason to believe, that whensoever God is pleas'd to work a great Deliverance, spiritual or temporal, he may first say, as of old, *The People are too many for me to give the Midianites into their Hands?* May he not purposely chuse *Few* as well as Inconsiderable Instruments, for the greater Manifestation of his own Glory? Very *few*, I grant, are the Instruments now employ'd: Yet a great Work is wrought already. And the fewer they are by whom this large Harvest hath hitherto been gathered in, the more evident must it appear to unprejudiced Minds, That the Work is not of Man, but of God.

8. "But they are not only *Few*, but *Unlearned* also." This is another grievous Offence; and is by many esteem'd a sufficient *Excuse*, for not acknowledging the Work to be of GOD.

The Ground of this Offence is partly true. Some of those who now preach are *unlearned*. They neither understand the antient Languages, nor any of the Branches of Philosophy. And yet this Objection might have been spared, by many of those who have frequently made it: Because *they* are *Unlearned* too (tho' accounted otherwise.) They have not themselves the very thing they require in others.

Men in general are under a great Mistake with Regard to what is called "The Learned World." They do not know, they cannot easily imagine, how little *Learning* there is among them. I do not speak of *Abstruse Learning*; but of what all Divines, at least of any Note, are supposed to have, *viz.* The Knowledge of the *Tongues*, at least *Latin, Greek and Hebrew*, and of the common *Arts and Sciences*.

How few Men of Learning, so called, understand *Hebrew*? Even so far as to read a plain Chapter in *Genesis*? Nay, how few understand *Greek*? Make an
easy

easy Experiment. Desire that grave Man, who is urging this Objection, only to tell you the *English* of the first Paragraph that occurs in one of *Plato's Dialogues*? I am afraid we may go farther still. How few understand *Latin*? Give one of them an *Epistle* of *Tully*, and see how readily he will explain it, without his *Dictionary*. If he can hobble thro' that, 'tis odds but a *Georgick* in *Virgil*, or a *Satire* of *Persius* sets him fast.

And with Regard to the *Arts* and *Sciences*: How few understand so much as the general Principles of *Logick*? Can one in ten of the Clergy (O Grief of Heart!) or of the *Masters* of *Arts* in either University, when an Argument is brought, tell you even the *Mood* and *Figure* wherein it is proposed? Or compleat an *Enthymeme*? Perhaps you do not so much as understand the Term: Supply the *Premiss* which is wanting, in order to make it a full *Categorical Syllogism*. Can one in ten of them demonstrate a *Problem* or *Theorem* in *Euclid's Elements*? Or define the common Terms used in *Metaphysics*? Or intelligibly explain the first Principles of it? Why then will they pretend to that Learning, which they are conscious to themselves they have not? Nay, and censure others who have it not, and do not pretend to it? Where are Sincerity and Candour fled?

It will easily be observed, that I do not depreciate *Learning* of any Kind. The Knowledge of the *Languages* is a valuable Talent; so is the Knowledge of the *Arts* and *Sciences*. Both the one and the other may be employ'd to the Glory of GOD, and the Good of Men. But yet I ask, Where hath GOD declared in his Word, that he cannot, or will not make use of Men that have it not? Has *Moses*, or any of the Prophets affirmed this? Or our Lord? Or any of his Apostles? You are sensible all these are against you. You know the Apostles themselves, all except *St. Paul*, were *αἰδέες ἀγράμματοι καὶ ἰδιῶται* common, unphilosophical, unletter'd Men.

9. "What! then you make yourselves like the *Apostles*." Because this silly Objection has so often been

been urged, I will for once spend a few Words upon it, tho' it does not deserve that Honour. Why, must not every Man, whether Clergyman or Layman, be in some Respects *like the Apostles*, or go to Hell? Can any Man be saved, if he be not holy, *like the Apostles*? A Follower of them, as they were of Christ? And ought not every Preacher of the Gospel, to be in a *peculiar Manner like the Apostles*, both in holy Tempers, in Exemplariness of Life, and in his indefatigable Labours for the Good of Souls? Woe unto every Ambassador of Christ, who is not *like the Apostles* in this! In Holiness; in making full Proof of his Ministry; in spending and being spent for Christ! We cannot, and therefore we need not be like them, in *working Outward Miracles*. But we may and ought, in *working together with GOD* for the Salvation of Men. And the same GOD who was always ready to help their Infirmities, is ready to help Ours also. He who made them *Workmen that needed not to be ashamed*, will teach us also *rightly to divide the Word of Truth*. In this Respect likewise, in Respect of his *having Help from GOD*, for the Work whereunto he is called, every Preacher of the Gospel is *like the Apostles*. Otherwise he is of all Men most miserable.

10. And I am bold to affirm, that these unletter'd Men, *have Help from GOD* for that great Work, the saving Souls from Death; seeing he hath enabled, and doth enable them still, to turn many to *Righteousness*. Thus hath he *destroyed the Wisdom of the Wise, and brought to nought the Understanding of the prudent*. When they imagined they had effectually shut the Door, and blocked up every Passage, whereby any Help could come to two or three Preachers, weak Body as well as Soul; who they might reasonably believe wou'd, humanly speaking, wear themselves out in a short Time: When they had gain'd their Point, securing (as they supposed) all the Men of Learning in the Nation; *He that sitteth in Heaven laughed them to scorn*, and came upon them by a Way they thought not of. *Out of the Stones he raised up People who should beget Children to Abraham*. We had

had no more Foresight of this than you. Nay, we had the deepest Prejudices against it: Until we could not but own, that GOD gave *Wisdom from above* to these unlearned and ignorant Men; so that the Work of the Lord prosper'd in their Hand, and Sinners were daily converted to GOD.

Indeed in the one Thing which they profess to know, they are not *ignorant* Men. I trust there is not one of them who is not able to go thro' such an Examination, in substantial, practical, experimental Divinity, as few of our Candidates for holy Orders, even in the University (I speak it with Sorrow and Shame, and in tender Love) are able to do. But Oh! what Manner of *Examination*, do most of *those Candidates* go thro'? And what Proof are the *Testimonials* commonly brought (as solemn as the *Form* is wherein they run) either of their *Piety* or *Knowledge*, to whom are intrusted those Sheep, which GOD hath purchased with his own Blood!

11. " But they are *Laymen*. You seem to be sensible yourself, of the Strength of this Objection. For as many as you have answered, I observe you have never once so much as touched on this."

I have not. Yet it was not Distrust of my Cause, but Tenderness to you which occasioned my Silence. I had something to advance on this Head also: But I was afraid you could not bear it. I was conscious to myself, that some Years since, to touch this Point, was to touch the Apple of my Eye. And this makes me almost unwilling to speak now; least I should *shock* the Prejudices I cannot *remove*.

Suffer, me however, just to intimate to you some Things, which I would leave to your farther Consideration. The *Scribes* of old, who were the ordinary *Preachers* among the *Jews*, were not *Priests*; they were no better than *Laymen*. Yea, many of them were incapable of the Priesthood, being of the Tribe of *Simeon*, not of *Levi*.

Hence probably it was, that the *Jews* themselves never urged it as an Objection to our Lord's Preaching (even those who did not acknowledge or believe, that he was sent of GOD in an *extraordinary* Character

that he was no *Priest* after the Order of *Aaron*. Nor indeed could be; seeing he was of the Tribe of *Judah*.

Nor does it appear, that any objected this to the *Apostles*. So far from it, that at *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, we find the *Rulers of the Synagogue* sending unto *Paul* and *Barnabas*, Strangers just come into the City, saying, *Men and Brethren, if ye have any Word of Exhortation for the People, say on*, Acts xiii. 15.

If we consider these Things, we shall be the less surprized at what occurs in the eighth Chapter of the *Acts*: At that Time there was a great Persecution against the Church, and they were all scattered abroad: (i. e. all the Church, all the Believers in Jesus) throughout the Regions of *Judea* and *Samaria*, (v. 1.) Therefore they that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the Word, (v. 4.) Now, what Shadow of Reason have we to say or think, that all these were ordained before they preached?

12. If we come to later Times; Was Mr. *Calvin* ordain'd? Was he either *Priest* or *Deacon*? And were not most of those whom it pleased *GOD* to employ in promoting the *Reformation* abroad, *Laymen* also? Could that great Work have been promoted at all in many Places, if *Laymen* had not preach'd? And yet how seldom do the very *Papists* urge this, as an Objection against the *Reformation*? Nay, as rigorous as they are in Things of this Kind, they themselves appoint, even in some of their strictest Orders, that "if any *Lay-brother* believes himself called of *GOD*, to preach as a *Missionary*, the Superior of the Order, being inform'd thereof, shall immediately send him away."

In all *Protestant* Churches it is still more evident, that *Ordination* is not held a necessary *Prerequisite* of *Preaching*: For in *Sweden*, in *Germany*, in *Holland*, and I believe in every reform'd Church in *Europe*, it is not only permitted but required, that before any one is ordained, (before he is admitted even into *Deacon's* Orders, wherever the Distinction between *Priests* and *Deacons* is retain'd) he should publicly preach a Year or more, *ad probandam facultatem*. And for this Practice, they believe

lieve they have the Authority of an exprefs Command of GOD: *Let these first be proved: Then let them use the Office of a Deacon, being found blameless,* 1 Tim. iii. 10.

13. "In *England*, however, there is nothing of this Kind; no *Layman* permitted to speak in publick. No! Can you be ignorant, that in an hundred *Churches*, they do it continually? In how many (particularly in the *West of England*) does the *Parish-Clerk* read one of the *Lessons*? (In some he reads the whole *Service* of the *Church*, perhaps, every *Lord's Day*) And do not other *Laymen* constantly do the same Thing, yea, in our very *Cathedrals*? Which being under the more immediate Inspection of the *Bishops*, should be Patterns to all other *Churches*.

Perhaps it will be said, "But this is not *Preaching*." Yes, but it is, essentially such. For what is it to *preach*, but *prædicare Verbum Dei*? To publish the Word of GOD? And this *Laymen* do all over *England*; particularly under the Eye of every *Bishop* in the Nation.

Nay, is it not done in the *Universities* themselves? Who *ordain'd* that *Singing Man* at *Christ Church*? Who is likewise utterly unqualified for the Work, murdering every Lesson he reads? Not even endeavouring to read it as the Word of GOD, but rather as an Old Song? Such a *Layman* as this, meddling at all with the Word of GOD, I grant is a Scandal to the *English Nation*.

To go a Step farther. Do not the Fundamental Constitutions of the *University of Oxford*, the *Statutes*, even as revised by *Archbishop Laud*, require every *Bachelor of Arts*, Nine in Ten of whom are *Laymen*, to read Three *Publick Lectures* in Moral Philosophy, on whatever Subject he chuses? My Subject, I well remember, was the Love of God. Now what was this but *Preaching*?

Nay, may not a Man be a *Doctor of Divinity* even in *Oxford*, tho' he never was *ordain'd* at all? The Instance of Dr. *Atwell*, (late) Rector of *Exeter College*, is fresh in every one's Memory.

These are a few of the Considerations that may readily

dily occur to any thinking Man on this Head. But I do not rest the Cause on these. I believe it may be defended a shorter Way.

14. It pleas'd GOD, by two or three Ministers of the Church of *England*, to call many Sinners to Repentance: Who, in several Parts, were undeniably turn'd from a Course of Sin, to a Course of Holiness.

The Ministers of the Places where this was done, ought to have received those Ministers with open Arms: And to have taken them who had just begun to serve GOD, into their peculiar Care; watching over them in tender Love, lest they shou'd fall back into the Snare of the Devil.

Instead of this, the greater Part spoke of those Ministers, as if the Devil, not GOD had sent them. Some, repelled them from the Lord's Table; Others stir'd up the People against them, representing them even in their Public Discourses, as Fellows not fit to live: Papists, Hereticks, Traitors; Conspirators against their King and Country.

And how did they watch over the Sinners lately re-form'd? Even as a Leopard watcheth over his Prey. They drove some of them also from the Lord's Table; to which till now they had no Desire to approach. They preached all Manner of Evil concerning them, openly cursing them in the Name of the Lord. They turned many out of their Work; persuaded others to do so too, and harrassed them all manner of Ways.

The Event was, That some were wearied out, and so turn'd back to their Vomit again. And then these good Pastors gloried over them, and endeavour'd to shake others by their Example.

15. When the Ministers by whom GOD had help'd them before, came again to those Places, great Part of their Work was to begin again; if it cou'd be begun again: But the Relapsers were often so harden'd in Sin, that no Impression cou'd be made upon them.

What cou'd they do in a Case of so extreme Necessity? Where so many Souls lay at Stake?

No Clergyman wou'd assist at all. The Expedient

that remained was, To find some one among themselves, who was upright of Heart, and of sound Judgment in the Things of GOD: And to desire him to meet the rest as often as he cou'd, in order to confirm them, as he was able, in the Ways of GOD, either by Reading to them, or by Prayer, or by Exhortation.

GOD immediately gave a Blessing hereto. In several Places, by Means of these plain Men, not only those who had already begun to run well, were hinder'd from drawing back to Perdition; but other Sinners also, from Time to Time, were converted from the Error of their Ways.

This Plain Account of the whole Proceeding, I take to be the best Defence of it. I know no Scripture which forbids making Use of such Help, in a Case of such Necessity. And I praise GOD who has given even this Help to those poor Sheep, when *their own Shepherds pitied them not.*

"But does not the Scripture say, *No Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of GOD, as was Aaron?*" Nor do these. The Honour here mention'd is the Priesthood. But they no more take upon them to be Priests than to be Kings. They take not upon them to administer the Sacraments, an Honour peculiar to the Priests of GOD. Only according to their Power, they exhort their Brethren, to continue in the Grace of GOD.

"But for these *Laymen* to exhort at all, is a Violation of all *Order.*"

What is this *Order* of which you speak? Will it serve instead of the Knowledge and Love of GOD? Will this *Order* rescue those from the Snare of the Devil, who are now taken Captive at his Will? Will it keep them who are escaped a little Way, from turning back into *Egypt*? If not, how shou'd I answer it to GOD, if rather than violate I know not what *Order*, I shou'd sacrifice Thousands of Souls thereto? I dare not do it. It is at the Peril of my own Soul.

Indeed if by *Order* were meant, *True, Christian Discipline*, whereby all the living Members of Christ are knit

knit together in one, and all that are putrid and dead, immediately cut off from the Body: This *Order* I reverence; for it is of GOD. But where is it to be found? In what Diocese, in what Town or Parish, within *England* or *Wales*? Are you Rector of a Parish? Then let us go no further. Does this *Order* obtain there? Nothing less. Your Parishioners are a Rope of Sand. As few (if any) of them are alive to GOD, so they have no Connexion with each other, unless such as might be among *Turks* or *Heathens*. Neither have you any Power to cut off from that Body, were it alive, the dead and putrid Members. Perhaps you have no Desire: But all are jumbled together, without any Care or Concern of yours.

It is plain then, that what *Order* is to be found is not among you, who so loudly contend for it, but among that very People whom you continually blame, for their *Violation* and *Contempt* of it. The little Flock you condemn is united together in One Body, by One Spirit: So that *if one Member suffers, all the Members suffer with it, if one be honour'd, all rejoice with it*. Nor does any dead Member long remain; but as soon as the Hope of recovering it is past, it is cut off.

Now suppose we were willing to relinquish our Charge, and to give up this Flock into your Hands; would you observe the same *Order* as we do now, with them and the other Souls under your Care? You *dare* not: Because you have Respect of Persons. You fear the Faces of Men. You *cannot*; because you have not overcome the *World*. You are not above the Desire of Earthly Things. And it is impossible you should ever have any *True Order*, or exercise any *Christian Discipline*, till you are wholly crucified to the *World*, till you desire nothing more but GOD.

Consider this Matter, I intreat you, a little farther. Here are Seven Thousand Persons (perhaps somewhat more) of whom I take Care, watching over their Souls, as he that must give Account. In order hereto it lies upon me (so I judge) at the Peril of my own Salvation, to know not only their Names, but their Outward and Inward States, their Difficulties and Dangers. Other

wise how can I know, either how to guide them aright, or to commend them to GOD in Prayer? Now if I am willing to make these over to you, will you watch over them in the same Manner? Will you take the same Care (or as much more as you please) of each Soul as I have hitherto done? Not such *Curam Animarum* as you have taken these Ten Years in your own Parish. Poor empty Name! Has not your *Parish* been in fact, as much a *Sine-cure* to you as your *Prebend*? O what an Account have you to give, to the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls!

18. There is one more *Excuse* for denying this Work of God, taken from the *Instruments* employ'd therein: That is, "That they are *wicked Men*." And a thousand Stories have been handed about to prove it.

But you may observe, their *Wickedness* was not heard of, till after they went about doing Good. Their Reputation for *Honesty* was till then unblemish'd. But it was impossible it should continue so, when they were publickly employed in *testifying of the World*, that its Deeds were evil. It could not be but the Scripture should be fulfill'd. *The Servant is not above his Master. If they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub, how much more them of his Household?*

Yet I cannot but remind considerate Men, in how remarkable a Manner the Wisdom of GOD has for many Years guarded against this Pretence, with respect to my Brother and me in particular. Scarce any two Men in *Great Britain*, of our Rank, have been so held out, as it were, to all the World; especially of those who from their Childhood had always loved and studiously sought Retirement. And I had procured what I sought. I was quite safe, as I supposed, in a little Country Town, when I was required to return to Oxford, without Delay, to take the Charge of some young Gentlemen, by Dr. Morley, the only Man then in *England* to whom I could deny nothing. From that Time both my Brother and I (utterly against our Will) came to be more and more observed and known, till we were more spoken of, than perhaps Two so

inconsiderable Persons ever were before in the Nation. To make us more publick still, as *honest* Madmen at least, by a strange Concurrence of Providences, overturning all our preceding Resolutions, we were hurried away to *America*. However, at our Return from thence, we were resolved to retire out of the World at once; being sated with Noise, Hurry and Fatigue, and seeking nothing but to be at Rest. Indeed for a long Season, the greatest Pleasure I had desired, on this Side Eternity, was

*Tacitum Sylvas inter reptare salubres,
Quarentem quicquid dignum sapiente bonoque.*

And we had attain'd our Desire. We wanted nothing. We look'd for nothing more in this World, when we were dragg'd out again, by earnest Importunity, to preach at one Place and another, and another, and so carried on, we knew not how, without any Design, but the general one, of saving Souls, into a Situation, which had it been named to us at first, would have appeared far worse than Death.

19. What a surprizing *Apparatus* of Providence was here! And what stronger Demonstrations cou'd have been given, of Men's acting from a Zeal for God, whether it were according to Knowledge or no? What Persons could, in the Nature of Things, have been (antecedently) less liable to Exception, with regard to their *Moral Character*, at least, than those the All-wise God hath now employ'd? Indeed I cannot devise what manner of Men could have been more unexceptionable on all Accounts. Had God indued us with greater natural or acquired Abilities, that very thing might have been turned into an Objection. Had we been remarkably *defective*, it would have been Matter of Objection, on the other hand. Had we been *Dissenters* of any Kind, or even *Low-Church Men*, (so call'd) it would have been a great Stumbling-block in the Way of those who are *zealous for the Church*. And yet had we continued in the Impetuosity of our *High Church Zeal*, neither should we have been willing to converse with

with *Dissenters*, nor they to receive any Good at our Hands. Some Objections were kept out of the Way, by our known *Contempt* of Money and Preferment: And others, by that rigorous Strictness of Life, which we exacted, not of others, but ourselves only. Inasmuch, that twelve or fourteen Years ago, the Censure of one who had narrowly observ'd us, (*me*, in particular) went no farther than this ;

“ Does *J*—— beyond his Strength persist to go,
 “ To his frail Carcase literally Foe?
 “ Careless of Health, as if in haste to die,
 “ And lavish Time t' insure Eternity ! ”

So that upon the Whole, I see not what GOD could have done more in this Respect which he hath not done: Or what *Instruments* he could have employ'd in such a Work, who would have been less liable to Exception.

20. Neither can I conceive how it was possible to do that Work, the doing of which we are still under the strongest Conviction, is bound upon us at the Peril of our own Souls, in a less exceptionable Manner. We have, by the Grace of GOD, behaved not only with Meekness, but with all Tenderness toward all Men ; with all the Tenderness which we conceived it was possible to use, without betraying their Souls. And from the very first, it has been our especial Care, to deal tenderly with our Brethren of the Clergy. We have not willingly provoked them at any Time ; neither any single Clergyman. We have not sought Occasion to publish their Faults ; we have not used a thousand Occasions that offered. When we were constrained to speak something, we spake as little as we believ'd we could, without offending GOD : And that little, tho' in plain and strong Words, yet as *modestly* and *lovingly* as we were able. And in the same Course we have steadily persevered (as well as in earnestly advising others to tread in our Steps) even tho' we saw, that with regard to Them, by all this we profited nothing ; tho' we knew we were still continually repre-

represented as *implacable Enemies to the Clergy*, as *Railers* against them, as *Slanderers* of them, as seeking all Opportunities to blacken and asperse them. When a Clergyman himself has vehemently accused me of doing this, I bless GOD he could not provoke me to do it. I still kept my Mouth as it were with a Bridle, and committed my Cause to a higher Hand.

21. The Truth is, you impute that Hatred to us, which is in your own Breast. (I speak not this of all the Clergy; GOD forbid! But let it fall on whom it concerns.) You, it is certain, have shewn the utmost Hatred to us, and in every possible Way: Unless you were actually to beat us (of which also we are not without Precedent) or to shoot us thro' the Head. And if you could prevail upon others to do this, I suppose you would think you did GOD Service. I do not speak without Ground. I have heard with my own Ears such Sermons (in *Staffordshire* particularly) that I should not have wonder'd, if as soon as we came out of the Church, the People had stoned me with Stones. And it was a natural Consequence of what that poor Minister had lately heard, at the Bishop's Visitation: As it was one great Cause of the miserable Riots and Outrages which soon followed.

It is this, my Brethren, it is your own Preaching, and not ours, which sets the People against you. The very same Persons who are diverted with those Sermons, cannot but despise you for them in their Hearts: Even those who on your Authority believe most of the Assertions which you advance. What then must they think of you, who know the greatest Part of what you assert to be utterly false? They may pity and pray for you; but they can esteem you no other, than False Witnesses against GOD and your Brethren.

22. "But what Need is there (say even some of a milder Spirit) of this Preaching in *Fields* and *Streets*? Are there not *Churches enough* to preach in?" No, my Friend, there are not; not for us to preach in. You forget: We are not suffered to preach there; else we should prefer them to any Places whatever. "Well, there are Ministers enough without you." Ministers

nifters *enough*, and Churches *enough*; for what? To reclaim all the Sinners within the four Seas? If there were, they would all be reclaim'd. But they are not reclaimed. Therefore it is evident, there are not Churches *enough*. And one plain Reason why, notwithstanding all these Churches, they are no nearer being reclaimed is this: They never come into a Church; perhaps not once in a Twelvemonth, perhaps not for many Years together. Will you say (as I have known some tender-hearted Christians) "Then it is *their own Fault*; let them die and be damn'd." I grant it is *their own Fault*. And so it was *my Fault* and *yours*, when *we* went astray, like Sheep that were lost. Yet the Shepherd of Souls sought after *us*, and went after us into the Wilderness. And *oughtest not thou to have Compassion on thy Fellow-servants, as he had Pity on thee?* Ought not *we* also to seek, as far as in us lies, and to save that which is lost?

Behold the amazing Love of GOD to the Outcasts of Men! His tender Condescension to their Folly! They would regard nothing done *in the usual Way*. All this was lost upon them. The *ordinary* Preaching of the Word of GOD, they would not even deign to hear. So the Devil made sure of these careless ones. For who should pluck them out of his Hand? Then GOD was moved to Jealousy, and went *out of the usual Way* to save the Souls which he had made. Then over and above what was ordinarily spoken in his Name, in all the Houses of GOD in the Land, he commanded a Voice to cry in the Wilderness, *Prepare ye the Way of the Lord. The Time is fulfill'd. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Repent-ye and believe the Gospel.*

23. Consider coolly, if it was not highly expedient, that something of this kind should be? How expedient, were it only on the account of those poor Sinners against their own Souls, who (to all human Appearance) were utterly inaccessible every other Way? And what Numbers of these are still to be found, even in or near our most populous Cities? What Multitudes of them were some Years since, both in *Kings-wood*, and the Fells
about

about *Newcastle*? Who, Week after Week, spent the Lord's Day, either in the Ale-house, or in idle Diversions, and never troubled themselves about going to Church, or to any publick Worship at all? Now, would you really have desired that these poor Wretches should have sinn'd on, till they dropt into Hell? Surely you would not. But by what other Means was it possible they should have been pluck'd out of the Fire? Had the Minister of the Parish preach'd like an Angel, it had profited them nothing; for they heard him not. But when one came and said, "Yonder is a Man preaching on the Top of the Mountain," they ran in Droves, to hear what he would say. And God spoke to their Hearts. It is hard to conceive any thing else which could have reach'd them. Had it not been for *Field-preaching*, the Uncommonness of which was the very Circumstance that recommended it, they must have run on in the Error of their Way, and perish'd in their Blood.

24. But suppose *Field-preaching* to be, in a Case of this Kind, ever so *expedient*, or even *necessary*, yet who will contest with us for *this Province*? May we not enjoy this quiet and unmolested? Unmolested, I mean, by any Competitors. For who, is there among you, Brethren, that is willing (examine your own Hearts) even to save Souls from Death at this Price? Would not *you* let a thousand Souls perish, rather than you would be the Instrument of rescuing them thus? I do not speak now with regard to Conscience, but to the Inconveniences that must accompany it. Can *you* sustain them, if you *would*? Can you bear the Summer-Sun to beat upon your naked Head? Can you suffer the wintry Rain or Wind, from whatever Quarter it blows? Are you able to stand in the open Air, without any Covering or Defence, when God casteth abroad his Snow like Wooll, or scattereth his hoar Frost like Ashes? And yet these are some of the smallest Inconveniences which accompany *Field-preaching*. Far beyond all these, are the Contradiction of Sinners, the Scoffs both of the Great Vulgar, and the Small; Contempt and Reproach of every kind; often more

more than verbal Affronts, stupid, brutal Violence, sometimes to the hazard of Health, or Limbs or Life. Brethren, do you envy us *this Honour*? What, I pray, would *buy* you to be a *Field-preacher*? Or what, think you, could induce any Man of common Sense, to continue therein one Year, unless he had a full Conviction in himself, that it was the Will of God concerning him?

Upon this Conviction it is (were we to submit to these Things on any other Motive whatsoever, it would furnish you with a better Proof of our *Distraction* than any that has yet been found) that *we* now do, for the Good of Souls, what you cannot, will not, dare not do. And we desire not that you should; but this one Thing, we may reasonably desire of you: Do not increase the Difficulties which are already so great, that without the mighty Power of God, we must sink under them. Do not assist in trampling down a little Handful of Men, who for the present stand in the Gap, between ten thousand poor Wretches and Destruction, till you find some others to take their Place.

25. Highly needful it is, that some should do this, lest those poor Souls be lost without Remedy. And it should rejoice the Hearts of all who desire the Kingdom of God should come, that so many of them have been snatch'd already from the Mouth of the Lion, by an *uncommon* (tho' not unlawful) Way. This Circumstance therefore is no just *Excuse*, for not acknowledging the Work of God. Especially, if we consider, that whenever it has pleased God to work any great Work upon the Earth, even from the earliest Times, he hath swept, more or less, out of the *common* Way: Whether to excite the Attention of a greater Number of People, than might otherwise have regarded it; or to separate the proud and haughty of Heart, from those of an humble, childlike Spirit: The former of whom he foresaw, trusting in their own Wisdom, would fall on that Stone and be broken; while the latter, enquiring with Simplicity, would soon know of the Work, that it was of God.

26. "Nay

26. "Nay (say some) but God is a God of *Wisdom*. And it is his Work, to give *Understanding*. Whereas *this Man* is one of them, and he is a *Fool*. You see the *Fruits* of their *Preaching*." No, my Friend, you don't. That is your Mistake. A Fool very possibly he may be. So it appears by his Talking, perhaps Writing too. But this is none of the *Fruits* of our *Preaching*. He was a Fool, before ever he heard us. We found and are likely to leave him so. Therefore his Folly is not to be imputed to us, even if it continue to the Day of his Death. As we were not the Cause, so we undertake not the Cure of Disorders of this Kind. No fair Man therefore can excuse himself thus, from acknowledging the Work of God.

Perhaps you will say, "He is not a Natural Fool neither. But he is so ignorant! He knows not the first Principles of Religion." It is very possible. But have Patience with him, and he will know them by and by. Yea, if he be in earnest to save his Soul, far sooner than you can conceive. And in the mean time, neither is this an Objection of any Weight. Many when they begin to hear us, may, without any Fault of ours, be utter Strangers to the whole of Religion. But this is no incurable Disease. Yet a little while and they may be wise unto Salvation.

Is the Ignorance you complain of among this People (you who object to the People more than to their Teachers) of another Kind? Don't they "know, how in Meekness to reprove or instruct those that oppose themselves?" I believe what you say: Many of them do not: They have not put on Gentleness and Long-suffering. I wish they had: Pray for them that they may; that they may be mild and patient toward all Men. But what if they are not? Sure you do not make this an Argument that God hath not sent us? Our Lord came, and we come, not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance: *Passionate Sinners*, (such as these whereof you complain) as well as those of every other Kind. Nor can it be expected they should be wholly delivered from their Sin, as soon as they begin to hear his Word.

27. A greater Stumbling-block then this is laid before you, by those that say and do not. Such I take it

for granted will be among us, altho' we purge them out as fast as we can: Persons that *talk much* of Religion, that *commend* the Preachers, perhaps are diligent in hearing them: it may be, read all their Books, and sing their Hymns; and yet no Change is wrought in their Hearts. Were they of old time as Lions in their Houses? They are the same still. Were they (in low Life) slothful or intemperate? Were they tricking or dishonest? over-reaching or oppressive? Or did they use to borrow and not pay? *The Ethiopian hath not changed his Skin.* Were they (in high Life) delicate, tender, self-indulgent? Were they nice in Furniture or Apparel? Were they fond of Trifles, or of their own dear Persons? *The Leopard hath not changed her Spots.* Yet their being with us for a Time proves no more, than that we have not the miraculous Discernment of Spirits.

Others you may find in whom there was a real Change. But it was only for a Season. They are now turned back, and are twofold more the Children of Hell than before. Yet neither is this any manner of Proof, that the former Work was not of GOD. No, not tho' these Apostates should, with the utmost Confidence, say all manner of Evil against us. I expect they should. For every other Injury hath been forgiven, and will be to the End of the World. But hardly shall any one forgive the intolerable Injury, of *almost persuading him to be a Christian.* When these Men therefore who were with us, but went out from among us, assert Things that may cause your Ears to tingle, if you consider either the Scripture, or the Nature of Man, it will not stagger you at all. Much less will it excuse you, for not acknowledging the Work in general to be of GOD.

28. But to all this it may possibly be replied, "When you bring your Credentials with you, when you prove by *Miracles* what you assert, then we will acknowledge that GOD hath sent you."

What is it you would have us *prove by Miracles*? That the *Doctrines* we preach are true? This is not the Way to prove that: (as our first Reformers replied to those of the Church of Rome, who, you may probably remember, were continually urging them with

this

this very Demand.) We prove the *Doctrines* we preach by Scripture and Reason; and, if need be, by Antiquity.

What else is it then we are to prove by *Miracles*?

Is it, 1. That *A. B.* was for many Years without God in the World, a common Swearer, a Drunkard, a Sabbath-breaker?

Or, 2. That he is not so now?

Or, 3. That he continued so till he heard us preach, and from that time was another Man?

Not so. The proper Way to prove these Facts, is by the Testimony of competent Witnesses: And these Witnesses are ready, whenever required, to give full Evidence of them.

Or would you have us prove by Miracles,

4. That this was not done by our own Power or Holiness? That God only is able to raise the Dead, those who are dead in Trespases and Sins? Nay, if you hear not Moses and the Prophets and Apostles on this Head, neither would you believe tho' one rose from the Dead.

It is therefore utterly unreasonable and absurd, to require or expect the Proof of *Miracles*, in Questions of such a Kind, as are always decided, by Proofs of quite another Nature.

29. "But you relate them yourself." I relate just what I saw, from time to time: And this is true, that some of those Circumstances seem to go beyond the ordinary Course of Nature. But I do not peremptorily determine, whether they were supernatural, or no? Much less do I rest upon them, either the Proof of other Facts, or of the *Doctrines* which I preach. I prove these in the ordinary Way; the one by Testimony, the other by Scripture and Reason.

"But if you can work *Miracles* when you please, is not this the surest Way of proving them? This would put the Matter out of Dispute at once, and supersede all other Proof."

You seem to lie under an entire Mistake, both as to the Nature and Use of *Miracles*. It may reasonably be question'd, whether there ever was that Man living upon Earth, except the Man Christ Jesus, that could

work Miracles *when he pleased*. God only *when he pleased*, exerted that Power, and by whomsoever it pleased him.

But if a Man could work *Miracles when he pleased*, yet is there no Scripture-Authority, nor even Example for doing it in order to satisfy such a Demand as this. I do not read, that either our Lord, or any of his Apostles, wrought any Miracle on such an Occasion. Nay, how sharply does our Lord rebuke those who made a Demand of this Kind? When certain of the Scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a Sign from thee: (Observe, this was their Method of answering the strong Reasons whereby he had just proved the Works in question to be of God!) He answered and said to them, an evil and adulterous Generation seeketh after a Sign. But there shall no Sign be given to it, but the Sign of the Prophet Jonas, Mat. xii. 38, 39. An evil and adulterous Generation! Else they would not have needed such a kind of Proof. Had they been willing to do his Will, they would, without this, have known that the Doctrine was of God.

Miracles therefore are quite needless in such a Case. Nor are they so conclusive a Proof as you imagine. If a Man could and did work them, in defence of any Doctrine, yet this would not supersede other Proof. For there may be *reperta Jevdus, lying Wonders*, Miracles wrought in support of Falshood. Still therefore his Doctrine would remain to be proved, from the proper Topicks of Scripture and Reason. And these even without Miracles are sufficient. But Miracles without these are not. Accordingly our Saviour and all his Apostles, in the midst of their greatest Miracles, never fail'd to prove every Doctrine they taught, by clear Scripture and cogent Reason.

30. I presume, by this Time you may perceive the gross Absurdity, of demanding Miracles in the present Case: Seeing one of the Propositions in question, (over and above our general Doctrines) viz. "That Sinners are reform'd," can only be proved by Testimony: And the other, "This cannot be done but by the Power of GOD," needs no Proof, being self evident.

"Why

"Why, I did once myself rejoice to hear (says a grave Citizen, with an *Air of great Importance*) that so many Sinners were reform'd, till I found they were only turn'd from one Wickedness to another; that they were turn'd from Cursing or Swearing, or Drunkenness, into the no less damnable Sin of *Schism*."

Do you know what you say? You have, I am afraid, a confused Huddle of Ideas in your Head. And I doubt, you have not *Capacity* to clear them up yourself: nor *Coolness* enough, to receive Help from others.

However I will try. What is *Schism*? Have you any determinate Idea of it? I ask the rather because I have found, by repeated Experiments, that a Common *English* Tradesman receives no more Light, when he hears or reads "This is *Schism*," than if he heard or read

Bombalio, stridor, clangor, tarantara, murmur.

Honest Neighbour, don't be angry. Lay down your Hammer, and let us talk a little on this Head.

You say, "We are in the damnable Sin of *Schism*," and therefore in as bad a State as Adulterers or Murderers.

I ask once more, what do you mean by *Schism*? "*Schism! Schism!* Why, it is separating from the Church." Ay, so it is. And yet every separating from the Church to which we once belonged, is not *Schism*. Else you will make all the *English* so be *Schismatics*, in separating from the Church of *Rome*. "But we had just Cause." So doubtless we had; whereas *Schism* is a causeless Separation from the Church of Christ. So far so good. But you have many Steps to take, before you can make good that Conclusion, that a Separation from a particular *National* Church, such as the Church of *England* is, whether with sufficient Cause or without, comes under the Scriptural Notion of *Schism*.

However, taking this for granted, will you aver in cool Blood, That all who die in such a Separation, that is, every one who dies a Quaker, a Baptist, an Independent or a Presbyterian, is as infallibly damn'd as if he died

died in the Act of Murder or Adultery? Surely you start at the Thought! It makes even Nature recoil. How then can you reconcile it to the Love that *hopeth all Things?*

31. But whatever State, they are in, who *causelessly separate* from the Church of England, it affects not those of whom we are speaking; for they *do not separate* from it at all.

You may easily be convinced of this, if you will only weigh the Particulars following.

1. A great Part of these, went to *no Church* at all, before they heard us preach. They no more pretended to belong to the Church of England, than to the Church of *Muscovy*. If therefore they went to *no Church* now, they wou'd be no farther from the Church than they were before.

2. Those who did *sometimes* go to Church before, go three times as often now. These therefore *do not separate* from the Church. Nay, they are united to it more closely than ever.

3. Those who *never* went to Church at all before, do go now *at all Opportunities*. Will common Sense allow any one to say, that these are *separated from the Church?*

4. The main Question is, Are they turn'd from doing the Works of the Devil, to do the Works of GOD? Do they now live soberly, righteously and godly, in the present World? If they do, if they live according to the *Directions* of the Church, believe her *Doctrines*, and join in her *Ordinances*: With what Face can you say, that these Men *separate* from the Church of England?

32. But in what State are they whom the Clergy and Gentry (and perhaps you for one) have successfully laboured to preserve from this damnable Sin of *Schism*? Whom you have kept from hearing these Men, and *separating from the Church?*

Is not the Drunkard that was, a Drunkard still? Enquire of his poor Wife and Family. Is not the common Swearer still horribly crying to GOD for
 Damnation

Damnation upon his own Soul? Is not the Sinner in every other Kind, exactly the same Man still? Not better at least, if he be not worse, than he was ten Years ago?

Now consider, 1. Does the Church of *England* gain either Honour, or Strength, or Blessing, by such Wretches as these calling themselves her Members? By Ten thousand Drunkards, or Whoremongers, or Common Swearers? Nay, ought she not immediately to spew them out? To renounce all Fellowship with them? Would she not be far better without them than with them? Let any Man of Reason judge.

2. Is this Drunkard's *calling* himself of the Church of *England*, of any more Use to him, than to the Church? Will this save him from Hell, if he die in his Sin? Will it not rather increase his Damnation?

3. Is not a Drunkard of any other Church, just as good as a Drunkard of the Church of *England*? Yea, is not a drunken *Papist* as much in the Favour of God, as a drunken *Protestant*?

4. Is not a cursing, swearing *Turk*, (if there be such an one to be found) full as acceptable to God, as a cursing, swearing *Christian*?

Nay, 5. If there be any Advantage, does it not lie on the Side of the former? Is he not the less inexcusable of the two? As sinning against less Light?

O why will you sink these poor Souls deeper into Perdition, than they are sunk already? Why will you prophesy unto them Peace, Peace; when there is no Peace? Why, if you do it not yourself (whether you cannot, or will not, God knoweth) should you hinder us from *guiding them into the Way of Peace*?

33. Will you endeavour to *excuse* yourself by saying, "There are not *many* who are the better for your Preaching: And these by and by will be as bad as ever; as such and such an one is already?"

I would to God I could set this in a just Light! But I cannot. All Language fails.

God begins a glorious Work in our Land. You set yourself against it with all your Might; to prevent its beginning where it does not yet appear, and to destroy

destroy it where-ever it does. In Part you prevail. You keep many from hearing the Word that is able to save their Souls. Others who had heard it, you induce to turn back from God, and to lift under the Devil's Banner again. Then you make the Success of your own Wickedness an *Excuse* for not acknowledging the Work of God! You urge "That not many Sinners were reform'd! And that some of those are now as bad as ever!"

Whose Fault is this? Is it ours? Or your own? Why have not Thousands more been reformed? Yea, for every one who is now turned to God, why are there not Ten thousand? Because you and your Associates laboured so heartily in the Cause of Hell; because you and they spared no Pains, either to prevent or to destroy the Work of God? By using all the Power and Wisdom you had, you hinder'd Thousands from hearing the Gospel, which they might have found to be the Power of God unto Salvation. Their Blood is upon *your* Heads. By inventing, or countenancing, or retailing Lies, some refined, some gross and palpable, you hinder'd others from profiting by what they did hear. *You* are answerable to God for these Souls also. Many who began to taste the good Word, and run the Way of God's Commandments, you by various Methods prevailed on to hear it no more. So they soon drew back to Perdition. But know, that for every one of these also, God will require an Account of *you* in the Day of Judgment!

34. And yet, in spite of all the Malice, and Wisdom and Strength, not only of Men, but of *Principalities and Powers, of the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, of the wicked Spirits in high Places*; there are Thousands found, who are turn'd from *dumb Idols, to serve the living and true GOD*. What a Harvest then might we have seen before now, if all who say, they are *on the Lord's Side*, had come, as in all reason they ought, *to the Help of the Lord against the Mighty*? Yea, had they only *not opposed* the Work of God, had they only *refrained from his Messengers*; might not the Trumpet of God have been heard long since in every

every Corner of our Land? And Thousands of Sinners in every County been brought to *fear GOD and honour the King*.

Judge of what immense Service we might have been, even in this single Point, both to our King and Country. All who hear and regard the Word we preach, *honour the King* for God's sake. They render unto *Cæsar the Things that are Cæsar's*, as well as unto *GOD the Things that are GOD's*. They have no Conception of *Piety* without *Loyalty*; knowing *the Powers that be, are ordained of GOD*. I pray God to strengthen all that are of this Mind, how many soever they be. But might there not have been at this Day, an Hundred thousand in *England*, thus minded more than are now? Yea verily; even by *our Ministry*; had not they who should have strengthened us, weaken'd our Hands.

35. Surely you are not wise! What Advantages do you throw away! What Opportunities do you lose? Such as another Day you may earnestly seek, and nevertheless may not find them. For if it please God to remove us, whom will you find to supply our Place? We are in all things *your Servants for Jesus sake*; tho' the more we love you, the less we are loved. Let us be employ'd not in the highest, but the meanest; and not in the easiest, but the hottest Service, Ease and Plenty we leave to those that want them. Let us go on in Toil, in Weariness, in Painfulness, in Cold or Hunger, so we may but testify the Gospel of the Grace of God. The Rich, the Honourable, the Great, we are thoroughly willing (if it be the Will of our Lord) to leave to you. Only let us alone with the Poor, the Vulgar, the Base, the Outcasts of Men. Take also to yourselves *the Saints of the World*: But suffer us to call Sinners to Repentance; even the most vile, the most ignorant, the most abandon'd, the most fierce and savage of whom we can hear. To these we will go forth in the Name of our Lord, desiring nothing, receiving nothing of any Man (save the Bread we eat, while we are under his Roof) and let it be seen, whether God hath sent us. Only, let not *your* Hands,

Hands, who fear the Lord, be upon us. Why should we be stricken of you any more?

IV. 1. Surely ye are *without Excuse*, all who do not yet know the Day of your Visitation! The Day, wherein the Great God, who hath been forgotten among us, Days without Number, is arising at once to be avenged of his Adversaries, and to visit and redeem his People. Are not his Judgments and Mercies both abroad? And still, will ye not learn Righteousness? Is not *the Lord passing by*? Doth not a *great and strong Wind* already begin to *rend the Mountains*, and to *break in Pieces the Rocks before the Lord*? Is not the *Earthquake* also felt already? And a *Fire* hath begun to burn in his Anger. Who knoweth what will be the End thereof? But at the same Time, he is speaking to many in a *still, small Voice*. He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear, lest he be suddenly destroy'd, and that without Remedy!

- 2. What *Excuse* can possibly be made for those, who are *regardless* of such a Season as this? Who are at such a Crisis, stupid, senseless, unapprehensive; caring for none of these things? Who do not give themselves the Pains to think about them, but are still *easy and unconcerned*? What! can there ever be a Point, on which it more behoves you to think? And that with the coolest and deepest *Attention*? As long as the Heaven and the Earth remain, can there be any thing of so vast Importance, as God's Last Call to a guilty Land, just perishing in its Iniquity!

You, with those round about you, deserved long ago to have *drank the Dregs of the Cup of Trembling*: yea, to have been *punish'd with everlasting Destruction, from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power*. But he hath not dealt with you according to your Sins, nor rewarded you after your Iniquities. And once more he is mixing Mercy with Judgment. Once more he is crying aloud, *Turn ye, turn ye from your evil Ways; for why will ye die, O House of Israel*? And will you not deign to give him the Hearing? If you are not careful to answer him

in this Matter. Do you still shut your Eyes, and stop your Ears, and harden your stubborn Heart? O beware, lest God laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your Fear cometh!

3. Will you plead, that you have other Concerns to mind? That other Business engages your Thoughts? It does so indeed; but this is your Foolishness; this is the very thing that leaves you without Excuse. For what Business can be of equal Moment? The Mariner may have many Concerns to mind, and many Businesses to engage his Thoughts: but not when the Ship is sinking. In such a Circumstance (it is your own) you have but one thing to think of. Save the Ship and your own Life together! And the higher Post you are in, the more deeply intent should you be on this one Point. Is this a Time for Diversions? For Eating and Drinking, and rising up to play? Keep the Ship above Water. Let all else go, and mind *this one thing!*

4. Perhaps you will say, "So I do. I do mind this one thing, how to save the sinking Nation. And therefore now I must think of *Arms* and *Provisions*. I have no Time now to think of *Religion*." This is exactly as if the Mariner should say, "Now I must think of my *Guns* and *Stores*. I have no Time now to think of the *Hold*." Why, Man, you must think of this or perish. It is *there* the Leak is sprung. Stop that, or you and all your *Stores* will go together to the Bottom of the Sea.

Is not this your very Case? Then, whatever you do, *stop the Leak*: Else you go to the Bottom! I do not speak against your *Stores*. They are good in their Kind; and it may be well they are laid in. But all your *Stores* will not save the sinking Ship, unless you can stop the *Leak*. Unless you can some Way keep out these *Floods of Ungodliness*, that are still continually pouring in, you must soon be swallowed up in the great Deep, in the Abyss of God's Judgments. This, this is the Destruction of the *English* Nation. It is *Vice*, bursting in on every Side, that is just ready to sink us, into Slavery first, and then into

into the nethermost Hell. *Who is a wise Man, and endued with Knowledge among you?* Let him think of this. Think of this, all that love your Country, or that care for your own Souls. If now especially you do not think of *this one Thing*, you have no *Excuse* before God or Man.

5. Little more *Excuse* have you, who are still in *doubt* concerning this Day of your Visitation. For you have all the Proof that you can reasonably expect or desire, all that the Nature of the Thing requires. That in many Places, Abundance of notorious Sinners are totally reformed, is declared by a thousand Eye and Ear-witnesses, both of their present and past Behaviour. And you are sensible, the Proof of such a Point as this, must, in the Nature of Things, rest upon Testimony. And that God alone is able to work such a Reformation, you know all the Scriptures testify. What would you have more? What Pretence can you have, for doubting any longer? You have not the least room to expect or desire any other, or any stronger Evidence.

I trust, you are not of those who fortify themselves against Conviction; who are "*resolved* they will never believe this." They ask, "Who are these Men?" We tell them plainly: But they credit us not. Another and another of their own Friends is convinced, and tell them the same thing. But their Answer is ready, "Are you turn'd Methodist too?" So *their* Testimony likewise goes for nothing. Now how is it possible these should ever be convinced? For they will believe none but those who speak on *one* Side.

6. Do you delay fixing your Judgment, till you see a Work of GOD, without any Stumbling blocks attending it? That never was yet, nor ever will. *It must needs be, that Offences will come.* And scarce ever was there such a Work of GOD before, with so few as have attended this.

When the Reformation began, what mountainous Offences lay in the Way, of even the sincere Members of the Church of Rome? They saw such Failings in those great Men, Luther and Calvin! Their vehement

ment *Tenaciousness* of their own Opinions ; their *Bitterness* toward all who differ'd from them ; their *Impatience* of Contradiction, and utter Want of *Forbearance*, even with their own Brethren.

But the grand Stumbling-block of all, was, their open avowed Separation from the Church ; their rejecting so many of the *Doctrines* and *Practices*, which the others accounted the most sacred ; and their continual *Invectives* against the Church they separated from, so much sharper than *Michael's* Reproof of Satan.

Were there fewer Stumbling-blocks attending the Reformation in England ? Surely no. For what was Henry the Eighth ? Consider, either his *Character*, his *Motives* to the Work, or his *Manner* of pursuing it ! And even King *Edward's* Ministry we cannot clear, of persecuting in their Turns, yea and burning Hereticks. The main Stumbling also still remained, viz. open Separation from the Church.

7. Full as many were the Offences that lay in the Way of even the sincere Members of the Church of England, when the People called *Quakers* first professed, that they were sent of God to reform the Land. Whether they were or no, is beside our Question : It suffices for the present Purpose to observe, that over and above their open, avowed, total Separation from the Church, and their vehement *Invectives* against many of her *Doctrines*, and the whole Frame of her *Discipline* : They spent their main Strength in disputing about *Opinions* and *Externals*, rather than in preaching Faith, Mercy, and the Love of God.

In these Respects, the Case was nearly the same when the *Baptists* first appeared in England. They immediately commenced a warm Dispute, not concerning the *Vitals* of Christianity, but concerning the *Manner* and *Time* of administering one of the *External Ordinances* of it. And as their *Opinion* hereof totally differed from that of all the other Members of the Church of England, so they soon openly declared their Separation from it, not without sharp *Censures* of those that continued therein.

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8. The same Occasion of Offence was, in a smaller Degree, given by the *Presbyterians* and *Independents* : For they also spent great Part of their Time and Strength, in opposing the commonly received *Opinions* concerning some of the *Circumstantials* of Religion; and for the sake of these, *separated* from the Church.

But I do not include that venerable Man, Mr. *Philip Henry*, nor any that were of his Spirit, in this Number. I know they abhorred contending about *Externals*. Neither did they *separate themselves* from the Church. They continued therein, till they were driven out, whether they would or no. - I cannot but tenderly sympathize with these; and the more, because this is, in part, our own Case. Warm Men spare no Pains at this very Day, to *drive us* out of the Church. They cry out to the People, where-ever one of us comes, "A Mad Dog, a Mad Dog!" If haply we might fly for our Lives, as many have done before us. And sure it is, we should have complied with their Desire, we should merely for Peace and Quietness have left the Church long before now, but that we could not in Conscience do it. And it is on this single Motive, it is for Conscience sake that we still continue therein; and shall continue (God being our Helper) unless they by Violence thrust us out.

9. But to return. What are the Stumbling-blocks in the present Case, compared to those in any of the preceding?

We do not dispute concerning any of the *Externals* or *Circumstantials* of Religion. There is no room; for we agree with you therein. We approve of, and adhere to them all: All that we learned together when we were Children, in our *Catechism* and *Common-Prayer Book*. We were born and bred up in your own Church, and desire to die therein. We always were, and are now, *zealous for the Church*; only not with a blind, angry Zeal. We hold, and ever have done, the same *Opinions*, which you and we received from our Forefathers. But we do not lay the main Stress of our Religion on any *Opinions*, right or wrong: Neither do we ever begin, or willingly join in any *Dispute* concern-

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ing them. The Weight of all Religion, we apprehend, rests on Holiness of *Heart* and *Life*. And consequently, wherever we come, we press this with all our Might. How wide then is the Difference between our Case and the Case of any of those that are above-mention'd? They *avowedly separated* from the Church: We utterly *disavow* any such Design. They severely, and almost continually, inveighed against the *Doctrines* and *Discipline* of the Church they left. We approve both the *Doctrines* and *Discipline* of our Church, and inveigh only against *Ungodliness* and *Unrighteousness*. They spent great Part of their Time and Strength in contending about *Externals* and *Circumstantials*. We agree with you in both; so that having no room to spend any Time in such vain *Contention*, we have our Desire of spending and being spent, in promoting plain, *Practical Religion*. How many Stumbling-blocks are removed out of *your Way*? Why do not you acknowledge the Work of *GOD*?

10. If you say, "Because you hold *Opinions* which I cannot believe are true:" I answer, Believe them true or false; I will not quarrel with you about any *Opinion*. Only see that your Heart be right toward God, that you know and love the Lord Jesus Christ; that you love your Neighbour, and walk as your Master walked, and I desire no more. I am sick of *Opinions*: I am weary to bear them: My Soul loaths this frothy Food. Give me solid and substantial Religion. Give me an humble, gentle Lover of God and Man; a Man full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocrisy: A Man laying himself out in the Work of Faith, the Patience of Hope, the Labour of Love. Let my Soul be with *these Christians*, wheresoever they are, and whatsoever *Opinion* they are of. *Whosoever thus doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my Brother, and Sister, and Mother.*

11. Inexcusably infatuated must you be, if you can even *doubt* whether the Propagation of this Religion be of *GOD*! Only more inexcusable are those unhappy Men, who *oppose, contradict, and blaspheme* it.

How long will you stop your Ears against him, that still crieth, *Why persecutest thou me?* It is hard for thee to kick against the Pricks; for a Man to contend with his Maker. How long will you despise the well known Advice of a great and learned Man, *Refrain from these Men, and let them alone.* If this Work be of Man, it will come to nought. But if it be of GOD, ye cannot overthrow it. And why should you be found even to fight against GOD? If a Man fight with GOD, shall he prevail? Canst thou thunder with a Voice like him? Make haste. Fall down. Humble thyself before him: Lest he put forth his Hand, and thou perish!

12. How long will you fight under the Banner of the great Enemy of GOD and Man? You are now in his Service: You are taking part with the Devil against GOD. Even supposing there were no other Proof, this would undeniably appear, from the goodly Company among whom you are enlisted, and who war one and the same Warfare. I have heard some affirm, that the most bitter Enemies to the present Work of GOD, were *Pharisees*. They meant, Men who had the Form of Godliness, but denied the Power of it. But I cannot say so. The sharpest Adversaries thereof whom I have hitherto known (unless one might except a few honourable Men, whom I may be excused from naming) were the Scum of Cornwall, the Rabble of Bilston and Darleston; the wild Beasts of Walsal, and the Turnkeys of Newgate.

13. Might not the very Sight of these Troops, shew any reasonable Man, to what General they belong'd? As well as the Weapons they never fail to use; the most horrid Oaths and Execrations, and lawless Violence, carrying away as a Flood whatsoever it is which stands before it: Having no Eyes, nor Ears, no Regard to the loudest Cries of Reason, Justice or Humanity. Can you join Heart or Hands with these any longer? With such an infamous, scandalous Rabble-rout, roaring and raging, as if they were just broke loose, with their Captain Apollyon, from the bottomless Pit? Does it not rather concern you, and that in the highest Degree, as well as every

every Friend to his King and Country, every Lover of Peace, Justice and Mercy, immediately to join and stop any such godless Crew, as they would join to stop a Fire just beginning to spread, or an *Inundation* of the Sea.

14. If, on the contrary, you join with that godless Crew, and strengthen their Hands in their Wickedness, must not you, in all Reason, be accounted, (like them) a *publick Enemy of Mankind*? And indeed such must every one appear, in the Eye of unprejudiced Reason, who opposes, directly or indirectly, the *Reformation* of Mankind. By *Reformation* I mean, the bringing them back (not to this or that System of *Opinions*, or to this or that Sett of *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, how decent and significant soever: but) to the calm Love of GOD and one another, to an uniform Practice of Justice, Mercy and Truth. With what Colour can you lay any Claim to Humanity, to Benevolence, to publick Spirit, if you can once open your Mouth, or stir one Finger, against such a *Reformation* as this?

'Tis a poor Excuse to say, "O, but the People are brought into several erroneous *Opinions*." It matters not a Straw, whether they are or no; (I speak of such *Opinions* as do not touch the Foundation) 'tis scarce worth while to spend ten Words about it. Whether they embrace this *religious Opinion* or that, is no more Concern to me, than whether they embrace this or that System of *Astronomy*. Are they brought to holy *Temper*s and holy *Lives*? This is mine, and should be your Enquiry: since on this both social and personal Happiness depend; Happiness, temporal and eternal. Are they brought to the Love of GOD and the Love of their Neighbour? Pure Religion and undefiled is this. How long then will you *darken Council, by Words without Knowledge*? The plain Religion now propagated is Love. And can you oppose this, without being an *Enemy to Mankind*?

15. No; nor without being an *Enemy to your King and Country*: Especially at such a Time as this. For however Men of no Thought may not see or regard it,

or

or hectoring Cowards may brave it out, it is evident to every Man of calm Reflection, that our Nation stands on the very Brink of Destruction. And why are we thus, but because *the Cry of our Wickedness is gone up to Heaven?* Because we have so exceedingly, abundantly, beyond Measure, *corrupted our Ways before the Lord.* And because to all our other Abominations we have added, the open fighting against GOD; the not only rejecting, but even denying, yea, blaspheming his last Offers of Mercy; the hindering others who were desirous to close therewith; the despitefully using his Messengers, and the variously troubling and oppressing those who did accept of his Grace, break off their Sins, and turn to him with their whole Heart.

16. I cannot but believe, it is chiefly on this Account, that GOD hath now a *Controversy with our Land.* And must not any considerate Man be inclined to form the same Judgment, if he reviews the State of *publick Affairs*, for only a few Years last past? I will not enter into Particulars. But, in general, can you possibly help observing, that whenever there has been any thing like a *publick Attempt*, to suppress *this new Sect* (for so it was artfully represented) another and another *publick Trouble* arose. This has been repeated so often, that it is surprizing any Man of Sense can avoid taking notice of it. May we *turn at length to him that smiteth us, bearing the Rod and him that appointeth it?* May we *humble ourselves under the mighty Hand of GOD*, before the great Deep swallow us up!

17. Just now, viz. on the 4th of this instant *December*, the Reverend Mr. *Henry Wickham*, one of his Majesty's Justices of Peace for the *West-Riding of Yorkshire*, writes an Order

To the Constable of *Kighley*, commanding him. "to convey the Body of *Jonathan Reeves*, (whose real Crime is, the calling Sinners to Repentance) to his Majesty's Goal and Castle of *York*: Suspected (saith the Precept) of being a Spy among us, and a dangerous Man to the Person and Government of his Majesty King *George.*"

GOD avert the Omen! I fear this is no Presage
 either of the Repentance or Deliverance of our poor
 Nation!

18. If we will not turn and repent, if we will harden
 our Hearts, and acknowledge neither his Judgments nor
 Mercies; what remains but the fulfilling of that dread-
 ful Word, which GOD spake by the Prophet Ezekiel:
*Son of Man, when the Land sinneth against me, by tres-
 passing grievously; then will I stretch forth my Hand up-
 on it, and break the Staff of the Bread thereof.—Though
 these three Men, Noah, Daniel and Job, were in it, they
 should deliver but their own Souls. Or if I bring a Sword
 upon that Land, and say, “Sword, go thro’ the Land:—
 Or if I send a Pestilence into that Land, and pour out my
 Fury upon it in Blood:—Though Noah, Daniel and Job
 were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall de-
 liver neither Son nor Daughter; they shall but deliver their
 own Souls by their Righteousness, Chap. xiv. ver. 13, 14,
 17, 19, 20.*

*Yet behold, therein shall be left a Remnant, that shall
 be brought forth, both Sons and Daughters.—And ye shall
 be comforted concerning the Evil that I have brought upon
 Jerusalem—And ye shall know that I have not done with-
 out Cause, all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD.
 Ver. 22, 23.*

London, Dec. 18,
 1745.

F I N I S.

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Will not take account of the situation

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1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the situation.

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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

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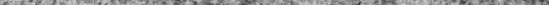
1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered.

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1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered.



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